

ISSN 0258 - 1744

# CHRISTIAN ORIENT

A JOURNAL OF EASTERN CHURCHES FOR CREATIVE THEOLOGICAL THINKING

MARCH 2002

VOL. XXIII NO.1



PROCESSED

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## ECCLESIOLOGY

EDITORIAL

THE ORTHODOXY OF MAR ABRAHAM, THE LAST CHALDEAN METROPOLITAN OF THE  
ST THOMAS CHRISTIANS IN INDIA

Paul Pallath

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Participants of the Synod of Bishops 2001 - Patriarch Gregory III, Lahom  
NEWS

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P.B.No.1, Kottayam 686 010

Tel: 0481 - 571807, 571809, 578319, 574594, 574596

Fax: 91-481-578525

E-mail: [santhom@santhom.org](mailto:santhom@santhom.org)

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# Happy Easter!



*Let the splendour and glory of resurrection be a halo  
and rainbow in those who believe in Christ.*

*Warm wishes to all our readers, well-wishers and  
friends!*

## EDITORIAL

**T**heological reflection on Church (ecclesiology) has become an attractive section of research especially in the post Vat II period. Ecclesiology is today no more studied simply as a traditional topic in systematic theology. There is a kind of an ecclesiological 'a priori' in theology. This foundational approach should be the guideline and measuring stick of doing theology in a meaningful way. The concept of the Church should precede and enter into the very structure of theology. The Church is the interpreter of the faith and faith traditions of the Church. This is known as the ecclesial approach in theology. This is true even with regard the interpretation of the sacred scripture. "Interpretation of the scripture is ultimately subject to the judgment of the Church, which exercises a divinely conferred commission and ministry of preserving and interpreting the Word of God" (DV 12).

One can write even on ecclesiological topic without proper ecclesial vision. Such inadequate theological and ecclesiological vision has already produced partial and incorrect theologies. The insights put forward by Vat II still remain unknown to a majority of the people. There are also biased interpretations on the Council's teaching. The very concept of tradition itself is sometimes very partially understood. Tradition is a dynamic reality; it is more than a dogma. According to Vatican II, it is a process by which the comprehensive deposit of faith becomes present in every age (DV 8). As Cardinal Ratzinger says: 'the catholic meaning of the reality of the Church is tacitly disappearing, without being expressly rejected'. Only by a comprehensive and detailed research into the very mystery of the Church can we preserve the real meaning of the Church. It is yet to be explored. The reality of the Church can be experienced only by exploring the trinitarian, christological, pneumatological and sacramental dimensions of the Church. The real content of ecclesiology is theo-logy. Apart from the theological content the Church has no meaning. The Church is of God, of Christ and of the Spirit. The Church is a mystery because God is mystery. The true face of the one Church of Christ still remains to be explored. For that the directives and orientations given in LG and OE are imperatives.

In our theological studies greater attention is to be given to ecclesiological issues. As Cardinal Walter Kasper has pointed out theology is possible only within the communion of the Church, on the foundation of the Church, and in subjection to the norms of the

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Church's living tradition. Theology is so to speak the reflected memory of the Church. In this light we can say that proper ecclesiological studies are the best means for authentic theological basis. The imposing achievements of the Second Vatican Council are to be popularized. An ecclesiological awareness should be considered as an integral part of the Christian theological formation. As Cardinal Döpfner says we want a Church that is a sign of the unity of human beings with God and of human beings with one another. These two dimensions are well articulated in the documents of Vat. II.

Christian Orient is very particular in giving sufficient emphasis on ecclesiological studies especially in the eastern perspectives. It has already done commendable service in promoting and popularizing the ecclesiological visions proposed by the Second Vatican Council. This issue of the Christian Orient gives top priority to the ecclesiological issues of the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Churches. It carries, carefully selected and well documented, three studies on ecclesiology.

The first article entitled as 'The Orthodoxy of Mar Abraham, The Last Chaldean Metropolitan of The St Thomas Christians In India' is by Dr Paul Pallath. It is an objective investigation into the life and activities of Mar Abraham from a historical and theological perspective. The author skillfully proves the orthodoxy of the said metropolitan by historical documentations which are reliable and incontestable. This scientific study is really a contribution to the ecclesiology of the St Thomas Christian tradition in India.

The second article is by Prof. Dr. Thomas Manoorampampil and is entitled as 'The Structure of The Anaphora of Addai and Mari in The Syro Malabar Qurbana'. It is an insightful investigation into the structure of the Qurbana. His arguments are well supported by other eminent liturgiologists. It contains a rich study on the epiclesis. The author also brings out the reasons for the restructuring of the present Qurbana Text. Using the latest official documents the author admits that the Anaphora of Addai and Mari can be considered valid without coherent Institution Narrative in it.

The third article, 'Church, The Sheepfold of God in Malankara Liturgy' is by Fr Philip Chempakassery of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. This is a liturgico-theological study in which the author attempts to articulate the expression Church, the sheepfold of God as reflected in the Syro-Antiochene liturgy used in the Malankara Catholic Church. The liturgical text books are used as the main sources in this study. Its biblical foundation is well worked out. It is a very powerful imagery in the ecclesiological tradition of the Syriac Churches.

Editor.

# THE ORTHODOXY OF MAR ABRAHAM, THE LAST CHALDEAN METROPOLITAN OF THE ST. THOMAS CHRISTIANS IN INDIA

Paul Pallath

## Introduction

About Mar Abraham, the last Chaldean metropolitan of the St. Thomas Christians in India, in the recent article: "Menezes on the Road to Diamper", K.J. John states: "The Bishop of Cochin and Catholic missionaries exerted all means to bring Mar Abraham who was in Kerala for over thirty years, to the Catholic fold. They failed in their attempts despite threats and allurements. Until his very end he continued to stick to his Nestorian faith cleverly disguising himself as a Catholic in the eyes of the Portuguese. According to the contemporary Portuguese historian, Gouvea, Mar Abraham refused to accept the Catholic faith till his end". Such a drastic affirmation necessarily calls for an objective investigation into the life and activities of Mar Abraham. The precise scope of this study is to consider his faith and

communion on the basis of reliable documents and incontestable historical facts.

## 1. The Historical Context of the Canonical Appointment of Mar Abraham

According to tradition, St. Thomas the Apostle who had disseminated the Christian faith in South India, also ordained sacred ministers including bishops to succeed him in the Christian communities established by him.<sup>2</sup> After the presumed interruption of the hierarchical succession in India due to various historical, ecclesiastical and canonical reasons, from time immemorial the St. Thomas Christians had to depend on the patriarch of the Babylonian Church for the appointment and consecration of bishops.<sup>3</sup> Probably from the fourth century onwards bishops

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1. K.J. John, "Menezes on the Road to Diamper", G. Nedungatt, ed., *The Synod of Diamper Revisited*, Rome 2001, 80.
  2. Cf. P.J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church*, Alleppey 1976, 24; *The Thomas Christians*, London-Bombay 1970, 30; Bernard Thomas, *Mar Thoma Kristianikal, (History of St Thomas Christians)*, 2nd edition Kottayam 1992, 62 & 121-123; V. Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manuel*, New Delhi-Madras 1989, vol. 2, 122.
  3. Authors use expressions like "the Church of the East", "the Babylonian Church", "the Assyrian Church", "the Church of Seleucia Ctesiphon (the see of catholicos-patriarch)", "the Persian Church" and the "Nestorian Church" to refer more or less to the same Church. However, from the time of the Catholic Patriarch John Sulaka (1551 - 1555), "the Chaldean Church" refers to the Catholic Church, while the Assyrian Church of the East refers to its counterpart not in full communion with the Roman Pontiff.
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came from the Babylonian Church, which also shared the same Thomistic liturgical and spiritual heritage. The channel of Persian ecclesiastical authority in India was through the bishopric of Rewardashir (Fars), which was strategically located on the direct sea route to India. Between 410-420 this bishopric was elevated to the status of a metropolitanate and was given jurisdiction over the Indian Church.<sup>4</sup> So the metropolitan of Rewardashir was nominating bishops in India. Patriarch Isoyab III (649- 660) terminated the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Rewardashir over the affairs of the Indian Church and constituted it an autonomous metropolitan church, answerable only to the patriarch.<sup>5</sup> From that time on the hierarchy of the Indian Church was headed by a Metropolitan of All India<sup>6</sup>, who had jurisdiction over the whole of India. Patriarch Timothy I (780-823) confirmed the provision of Isoyab III and reserved the right to ordain the Metropolitan of All India to the patriarch himself.<sup>7</sup>

The " Metropolitan of All India", nominated by the patriarch, was chiefly

occupied with the " munus sanctificandi", administering only those sacred mysteries exclusively reserved to a bishop. The effective leader of the St. Thomas Christians was the " Archdeacon of All India" who was always a celibate priest from among the St. Thomas Christians and who practically governed the Church except in matters that needed the exercise of episcopal power. In brief, one can affirm that the Patriarch of the Babylonian Church was the canonical head of the Indian Church until the nomination of the first Latin bishop, Francis Ros SJ to the see of the St. Thomas Christians on 20 December 1599.

Whatever be the nature of the communion of the preceding patriarchs<sup>8</sup> it is evident that from the time of Patriarch John (Simon) Sulaqa (1551 - 1555) a section of the Assyrian Church of the East, entered into full communion with the Roman Church, which came to be known as the Chaldean Church. The patriarch elect, John (Simon) Sulaqa, reached Rome on 18 November 1552 and made the profession of faith " ore et scripto" on 15 February

4 Cf. S.H. Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia, Volume I: Beginnings to 1500*, Orbis Books, New York 1998, 267-268.

5 Cf. S.H. Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia*, 257 & 269.

6. J. Kollaparambil, "Sources on the Hierarchical Structure of the St. Thomas Christian Church in the Pre-Diamper Period", B. Puthur, ed., *The Life and Nature of the St. Thomas Christian Church in the Pre-Diamper Period*, Kochi 2000, 168.

7. Cf. J. Kollaparambil, "Sources on the Hierarchical Structure of the St Thomas Christian Church..." 168; S.H. Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia*, 353; P. J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church*, 31; *The Thomas Christians*, 65-66.

8 For the relationship between the Babylonian patriarchs and Rome before this time, see X. Koodapuzha, *Faith and Communion of the Indian Church of the Saint Thomas Christians*, Kottayam 1982, 37-80; Podipara, *The Thomas Christians*, 46-51; J. Habbi, "Signification de l'union Chaldeenne de Mar Sulaqa avec Rome en 1553", *L'Orient Syrien* 2 (1966) 201-203.

1553. In the Consistory of 20 February 1553 he was confirmed as the Patriarch of Mossul in Assyria.<sup>9</sup> In the bull of confirmation, *Divina disponente clementia*, Pope Julius III (1550-1555) also acknowledged the jurisdiction of the Chaldean Patriarch in India. In fact Sulaqa was confirmed as the patriarch of "Mossul, the Island of Tigris and other cities and oriental territories... and also the monasteries of the same nation existing in Sin, Masin and Calicut as well as the whole of India".<sup>10</sup> On 28 April 1553 he also received pallium from the Pope as a sign of full pontifical power.<sup>11</sup> Since the new Patriarch requested an expert of ecclesiastical sciences as a counsellor, on 23 June 1553 the Pope nominated Ambrosius Buttigeg OP, a Maltese Dominican as Nuncio to Mossul and granted him ample faculties. Bishop Buttigeg selected another Dominican, Anthony Sahara as his companion and assistant. The Patriarch and the two papal delegates reached their destination at the end of the year 1553 and began to execute their mandates.<sup>12</sup>

After Sulaqa was martyred in January 1555, Mar Abdiso (also called

Ebediesus), Bishop of Djezireh Ibn Omar, one of the six prelates appointed and consecrated by Sulaqa, was elected the new Patriarch in 1555 under the supervision of the delegate Bishop Ambrosius Buttigeg and Fr. Anthony Sahara. Though request for confirmation was sent to Pope Paul IV (1555-1559) immediately after the election, the new Patriarch could not have reached Rome until 1561 due to political and ecclesiastical reasons. On 7 March 1562 the patriarch elect made the solemn profession of faith in the presence of Pope Pius IV (1559-1565), who confirmed him in office.<sup>13</sup> On 4 May 1562 the Pope granted him pallium and on 1 August many other special privileges and faculties.<sup>14</sup>

In 1555 the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Abdiso, the legitimate canonical head of the St. Thomas Christians sent two Catholic bishops to India: Mar Joseph Sulaqa, the brother of John Sulaqa (former Catholic patriarch) as metropolitan of the St. Thomas Christians and Mar Elias as a Visitor and representative of the Patriarch. These two catholic bishops, accompanied by two Dominicans, Roman Catholic Latin

9 The bull of confirmation: *Divina disponente clementia* in S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes inter Sedem Apostolicam et Assyriorum Orientalium seu Chaldaeorum Ecclesiam*, Romae 1902, 15-23; also in *Subsidium ad Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae*, Alleppey 1903, 4-7.

10 "... Postmodum vero ecclesia patriarchali de Muzal in Syria orientali cui bo.memoriae Simon Maria Patriarcha de Muzal et insulae Tigris ac caeterarum ci vitatum et terrarum orientalium eidem Patriarchae subjectarum, necnon monasteriorum ejusdem in Sui Massin et Calicuth ac *tota India* existentium eidem etiam Patriarchae subditorum dum viveret praesidebat...". S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 17-18; *Subsidium ad Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae*, 4.

11 The bull of conferring of the pallium: *Cum nos nuper* in S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 24-27; see also J. Habbi, "Signification de l'union Chaldeenne de Mar Sulaqa...", 221.

12 For details, see G. Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea nel secolo dell' Unione*, *Orientalia Christiana* XXIX, Roma 1933, 6-27.

13 S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 35-58 & 61-67.

14 Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 59-61.

Bishop Ambrosius Buttigeg, the papal Nuncio to the East and his companion Anthony Sahara OP, reached Goa in November 1555. In fact, Bishop Buttigeg and Anthony Sahara had been authorized by Pope Julius III to inquire into the state of affairs of the Chaldean Christians in India and to make a report to Rome. Although the letters that Patriarch John Sulaqa brought from Pope Julius III (Authorization of the apostolic visit) and the testimonials of Patriarch Abdiso were presented to the Portuguese authorities, the two Chaldean bishops were arrested and detained in the Franciscan monastery of Bassein near Bombay, while the papal Nuncio Bishop Buttigeg and Fr. Anthony Sahara were obliged by Portuguese religious and political authorities to remain in Goa itself. In the report submitted to Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santori in Rome, Mar Elias (after his return from India) describes their tragic fate in Goa:

...the Patriarch Mar Ebediesus created Mar Joseph, brother of the former Patriarch Sulaqa, the Archbishop of India, in order to provide for the Chaldeans who are in the Indies from Cochin up to the Indies of St. Thomas. He sent myself as a companion (to Mar Joseph) together with Bishop Ambrosius and friar Anthony and two other Chaldean friars, with recommendation letters to the Portuguese Viceroy in India, which Patriarch Sulaqa brought from Rome, namely from the Apostolic See... Arrived in Goa, they presented the said letters, but were placed in a monastery, where they remained for

one and a half years...<sup>15</sup>

The papal nuncio, the Dominican Latin Bishop Ambrosius Buttigeg wrote a letter to King John III of Portugal on 25 December 1556, in which he laments about his arrest and detention in Goa by the "will and mandate of the Governor of Your Highness".

...Your Majesty, I would wish you understand that I, a bishop of the Roman Church and a Legate or Nuncio (though unworthy) of the Pope and of the Holy Apostolic See, could have employed the spiritual arms of the Catholic Church, since they have done me violence and have impeded my course in the service of the apostolic See (and this) in accordance with the law of nature (since violence could be repelled by violence). However, this way would have been scandalous, against the person of the Governor and against this city according to the doctrine of the canon... Then on account of my great reverence towards Your Majesty I decided to wait patiently, if not enough one year, four and five, and even the whole period of my life.<sup>16</sup>

If faith was the only concern of the Portuguese authorities there was no reason to arrest the papal Nuncio, Latin Catholic bishop Ambrosius Buttigeg and the two Chaldean Catholic bishops, who brought testimonial letters from the Pope himself. On 20 November 1557 the custodian of the two Chaldean bishops in Bassein, the

15 The printed versions of the report of Mar Elias kept in the Vatican Archives can be found in *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae*, 11, 239-241; S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 90-97 and in Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea...*, 199-203, here p. 201.

16 J. Wicki, "Zur Orientreise des papstlichen Nuntius Ambrosius Buttigeg O.P.", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 19 (1953) 360-361; the complete text of the letter in pp. 358-371. The spiritual arms of the Catholic Church mean canonical punishments like excommunication.

Portuguese Friar Antonio de Porto, wrote a letter to the King of Portugal, in which he acknowledged the strict orthodox faith, exemplary life and heroic virtues of the two Chaldeans.<sup>17</sup>

Since Mar Joseph, "the Metropolitan of India", canonically nominated by the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Mar Abdiso, could not have taken possession of his diocese, since he was detained in Goa, the Patriarch nominated Mar Abraham as the bishop of the St. Thomas Christians, considering their constant requests. In fact, after the death of Mar Jacob in 1950, they had not received any bishop. Being aware of the fate of Mar Joseph and his companions, Abraham took care to avoid Goa and reached Kerala in 1557. The St. Thomas Christians, who had no bishop for not less than seven years, received Mar Abraham with great enthusiasm and appropriate solemnity.

Soon the shocking news about the arrival of the new bishop Mar Abraham in Kerala reached Goa. The Portuguese religious and political authorities understood that their strategy to keep aloof the Chaldean bishops from the St. Thomas Christians had utterly failed. Therefore, in the second half of 1558 they set free Mar Joseph and Mar Elias (during the eighteen months of detention the two Chaldeans were taught to celebrate Latin Mass and other ceremonies) together with the papal Nuncio Bishop Ambrosius Buttigeg and his companion Anthony Sahara. All of

them were permitted to go to Kerala on condition that they would not have exercised any jurisdiction without the consent of the Portuguese Latin Archbishop of Goa. Afterwards the Portuguese military arrested Mar Abraham (in 1558) and brought him in custody to Goa to be deported to Lisbon in Portugal.

Since the history of Mar Joseph and Mar Abraham are interlinked and concomitant, the one cannot be comprehended without the other. For the sake of clarity we describe first the fate of Mar Joseph. The companions of Mar Joseph, the papal Nuncio Bishop Ambrosius Buttigeg died in Cochin in 1558 and Bishop Mar Elias returned to his Patriarch as preplanned; after a few years he went to Rome and submitted the report, which we have already cited, about the needs of the Chaldean Church. By the brief of 24 January 1561, Pope Paul IV (1555 - 1569) unexpectedly called back Fr. Anthony Sahara.<sup>18</sup> On 17 November 1564 he was nominated bishop of "Vico Equense nel Napoletano" in Italy.

As soon as Anthony Sahara left for Rome, the Inquisition of Goa forced Mar Joseph to go Lisbon, where he was kept for more than one year. In fact, he succeeded in proving his orthodoxy and innocence before the Inquisition of Lisbon. Although it was judged inopportune to allow Mar Joseph to proceed to Rome for the *ad limina* visit, Pope Pius IV (1559 - 1565) sent him a blessing together with a brief dated

17 The complete text of the letter in the Portuguese language can be found in Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea...*, 40-43.

18 The brief in *Corpo Diplomatico Protuguez* IX, 173 f.

27 June 1564, in which the Pope exhorted him to return to Malabar for teaching the Christian faithful there "eam fidem et doctrinam" which Patriarch Abdiso professed in Rome.<sup>19</sup> After a few years, Mar Joseph was again accused of heresy by the Portuguese; he was arrested (second time) and deported to Lisbon and then to Rome. The trial conducted in Rome by the order of Pope Pius V enabled the Roman judges to recognize anew his orthodox Catholic faith and religious integrity.<sup>20</sup> Mar Joseph died in Rome in 1569, when he was about to be made cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, as a reward for his great devotion, strong Catholic faith and heroic sufferings.<sup>21</sup> About his death in Rome, Cardinal Tisserant writes:

Yet the measure of suffering was full, and Mar Joseph received, near the tomb of the Apostles, the crown which he had merited, through his long and slow martyrdom which was perhaps a more painful one than that of his heroic brother.<sup>22</sup>

The strong faith of Mar Joseph becomes all the more evident when one considers the fact that despite the Portuguese political and religious power in the papal curia of that time, he succeeded in proving his orthodoxy, without being assisted or defended by anybody.

## 2. Mar Abraham Proves His Orthodoxy in Rome and Returns to India

We have already seen that Mar Abraham was arrested in 1558 to be deported to Lisbon in Portugal. But on the way to Portugal, when the ship anchored in Mozambique he eluded his guards and escaped to Ormuz, from where he made his way to Mossul. Patriarch Abdiso, who had received assurances from the Pope about his jurisdiction over the St. Thomas Christians, sent Mar Abraham to Rome with testimonial letters. The Chaldean Bishop resided a few years in Rome, at the end of which he made the profession of faith and obtained two recommendation letters signed by the Pope himself dated 28 February 1565, addressed to the Archbishop of Goa and to the bishop of Cochin respectively. The Pope also sent a letter to Patriarch Mar Abdiso on 23 February 1565 informing him of the warm reception extended to Mar Abraham in Rome and reconfirming his jurisdiction in Malabar. We cite the relevant part of this letter concerning Mar Abraham:

Even though, as we have learnt, he is a man of great intellect and a great scholar of sacred Christian literature and dogma, and he is endowed with such honesty and moral integrity which befits a religious man, he suffered inconveniences in India. We have

19 The brief in *Corpo Diplomatico Protuguez* X, 170; Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea...*, 89-90.

20 See Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea...*, 92-93.

21. Cf. Francisco de Souza, *Oriente Conquistado a Jesus Christo pelos Padres da Companhia de Jesus da Provincia de Goa*, part II, Bombay 1886, 75; G. T. Mackenzie, "History of Christianity in Travancore", in V. Nagan Aiya, *The Travancore State Manuel*, vol. 2, 165.

22. Tisserant, *Eastern Christianity in India*, Bombay 1957, 41. Here the reference is to Patriarch John (Simon) Sulaqa, who had to embrace martyrdom for the sake of maintaining communion with Rome.

been sorry about that, but we believe that the Lord permitted it so that his faith might be explored, and success might result from the test. Upon his return to India we gave him, as he requested from us, letters of recommendation. Yet, we think it expedient that your Fraternity assign to him a diocese and a place of residence, dividing the diocese between him and another Bishop of your country (here the reference is to Mar Joseph), who we have heard, dwells in those regions, so that each one may recognize which flock he has to feed and protect and so neither of them causes inconvenience to the other in fulfilling the ministry. As it was referred to us, since Abraham desired to assign himself as residence the neighbouring place of the Portuguese territory, called Angamaly, we exhort Your Fraternity to comply with his wishes in this matter.<sup>23</sup>

In this letter the Pope categorically, explicitly and unambiguously confirms the jurisdiction of the Chaldean Patriarch over the St. Thomas Christians in India, which Pope Julius III publicly acknowledged in the bull of confirmation of Patriarch John (Simon) Sulaqa. The Pope explicitly acknowledges the right of the Chaldean patriarch to create dioceses and nominate bishops in India. It is remarkable that the supreme Pontiff, in order to respect fully the jurisdiction of the Patriarch, only advises him to divide the territory of the

St. Thomas Christians into two dioceses and to assign the Angamaly to Mar Abraham.

Considering the particular importance of the letters Pius IV to the Archbishop of Goa and the bishop of Cochin for determining the orthodoxy of Mar Abraham, we are providing their full translation

## 2. 1 Letter of Pope Pius IV to the Archbishop of Goa

Venerable Brother, greetings and apostolic blessings<sup>24</sup>

To the threshold of the Apostles (*ad limina Apostolorum*), came from those regions of India, this beloved brother Abraham, Chaldean by nationality, constituted, as we have learnt, archbishop by our Venerable Brother Abdiso, Patriarch of the Assyrians, in the diocese there which belongs to him, in consideration of his merits towards him (Patriarch Abdiso), from whom he brought letters of recommendation; the dangers of such a long and perilous journey which he undertook moved our heart. In fact, he was inspired to do so by his truly outstanding devotion to the Holy See. From the authoritative testimonials given by his Patriarch and by others in those regions who knew him well,

23 Vatican Secret Archives, Archiv. de Castello, Armad. VII, Caps. V, n. 9; printed text in S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relations*, 69-71; the complete Latin text and the English translation of this letter can be found in P. Pallath, "Were the St Thomas Christians in India Nestorians at the time of the Synod of Diamper in 1599?", *Ephrem's Theological Journal*, vol. 5, no. 1 (March 2001) 46-48.

24 Vatican Secret Archives, Archiv. de Castello, Armad. VII, Caps. V, N. 9; printed text in S. Giamil, *Genuine Relations...*, 71-72; Latin text with English translation in P. Pallath, "Were the St Thomas Christians in India Nestorians...", 48-50.

we have realized that he is a pious and devout man ; in fact he himself has proved those testimonies by his exemplary life here. Furthermore, during his stay in this city he took care that the faith of the Holy Roman Church which he had previously received, might be taught to him with greater care by learned and devout men who, upon our mandate, had been chosen for this task; and he fully accepted what they taught. Moreover, as proof of this matter, following the example of his Patriarch, he left here in Rome a sure document, signed by his own hand. Therefore, we have judged that upon his returning home on account of this testimony and our recommendation, the following course should be taken. For the same reason we exhorted his Patriarch to divide that diocese in those parts which belongs to him and which borders the diocese of Cochin, between himself and another person (here the Pope refers to Mar Joseph) and to assign to both a place of residence so that each one of them may recognize his own flock and not be of hindrance to the other in fulfilling his ministry. We exhort your Fraternity, that you take care that what the Patriarch will decide for both should be by all means kept and put into effect, our authority also being used with our beloved son the Viceroy, if necessary, provided Abraham, as we hope, remains in the faith and communion of the Catholic church. As we consider him to be worthy of our recommendation, so too do we consider that his Patriarch, who wrote so carefully about him, must also be respected. Great care must be taken that

nothing be neglected concerning what he decides in consideration of our advice (suggestion), lest he may have a just cause for complaint.

If such a thing happens, it would be harmful to this Holy See and to us, (we) who confirmed this same Patriarch, an exceedingly good and pious man, who about three years ago had come from Assyria all the way to the Apostolic See to obtain the communion of the Roman Church and who professed due reverence and obedience to this Holy See, and whom, after we had granted to him the pallium and confirmed his privileges, received into our faith and that of the Holy See. For this reason, we judge it just and wish that his jurisdiction remains intact and inviolate.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's on the last day of February in 1565 in the sixth year of our Pontificate.

## 2.2 Letter of Pope Pius IV to the Bishop of Cochin

Venerable Brother, greetings and apostolic blessings.<sup>25</sup>

He who will deliver these letters to you, by name Abraham, by nationality Chaldean, who as we learnt, was appointed Bishop in those parts by our Venerable Brother Abdiso, Patriarch of the Assyrians, came to the Apostolic See with letters of recommendation from his Patriarch. We graciously received him on account of the

25 Vatican Secret Archives, Archiv. de Castello, Armad, VII, Caps. V, n. 9; printed text in S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes*, 73; Latin text with English translation in P. Pallath, "Were the St Thomas Christians in India Nestorians...", 51-53.

credible testimonials concerning his honest religious life and on account of his Patriarch who, about three years ago came to promise obedience to the Holy See and to obtain confirmation of his Priesthood; and after his rightful and fully devoted profession of the faith of the Holy Roman Church, we confirmed him in his office. He also received the pallium, as is the custom. After his example, Abraham also received the faith of the Roman Church and most solemnly professed in a public document which he personally signed, that he would keep that faith for ever and hand it on to those over whom was to preside.

We wish your Fraternity to be acquainted with these matters, so that you may understand that on account of his communion with the Apostolic See and in respect of his Patriarch, you must embrace him with fraternal charity, and as he perseveres in the faith and in his devotion to the Holy See (we hope that he will do so), he must be defended from all harm; and protected by your patronage, as he hopes, he may reside, without any molestation and impediment, where his Patriarch has placed him and exercise the office assigned to him, so that he may bring as many souls as possible to Christ. Therefore, you protect him from all harm in such a way and so diligently that from your conduct it may be perceived how much you continue to revere us and the Holy See and how greatly you respect the good name, the equity and the justice of the same See. For, we wish and desire that he obtains the diocese, which his Patriarch has assigned to him, without any impediment whatsoever.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's on the last day of February 1565.

1. In these letters the Pope reminds the bishops of Goa and Cochin that the Chaldean Patriarch Mar Abdiso personally went to Rome, made the profession of faith there and obtained the pallium of the Roman Church, according to the custom of the time; hence he is a Catholic patriarch in full and explicit communion with the Roman Pontiff.

2. The Pope warns the Archbishop of Goa that it would be detrimental to the Pope himself and to the Apostolic See, if he would hinder the jurisdiction of the Patriarch, and orders that his jurisdiction must remain intact and inviolate.

3. The Pontiff underlines the fact that Mar Abraham is a good Catholic bishop who made the profession of faith in Rome, after he had been examined and instructed by competent experts nominated by himself. He expresses sorrow for the inconveniences Abraham suffered in India and asks the Archbishop of Goa and the Bishop of Cochin not to hinder Mar Abraham in any way in the administration of the diocese assigned to him by his patriarch.

4. In brief, beyond any shadow doubt the Pope made it clear to the Archbishop of Goa and the Bishop of Cochin that Mar Abraham was a Catholic bishop, canonically appointed to the see of St. Thomas by the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Mar Abdiso, who was in full communion with Rome and who had

legitimate jurisdiction in India over the St. Thomas Christians.

According to the advice of Pope Pius IV, Patriarch Abdiso bifurcated the territory of the St. Thomas Christians into two dioceses and appointed Mar Abraham the Metropolitan of the Archdiocese of Angamaly and Mar Joseph the bishop of the rest of the territory. In the decree of the Patriarch addressed to George Temudo, the Archbishop of Goa, we read:

And now with the help of the Most Holy Trinity, according to the will of God and the Holy Roman Church, the mother of Churches, and of our own will, with the authority communicated to us by the same Church, and which we have received from Pope Pius IV, we decide as follows: We divide and give to this person who brings our letters, Metropolitan Mar Abraham, the half of the flock of our Syrians in Indies, the other half to Mar Joseph, our son and brother; Angamaly is given to Mar Abraham, a portion greater than half near Gamila, in consideration of the fatigue in betaking himself to the Pope, and as our Lord the Pope commanded. And this should be made clear to all who will happen to read these lines, that after us, that is, while we live or after our death, he (Abraham) should be the superior (head) of all bishops and metropolitans. Furthermore, you must know that when one of these two bishops dies or goes to another place, the one who will remain, should govern the people of the whole flock (of Syrian Christians).<sup>26</sup>

It is remarkable that Mar Abraham was nominated the head (protos) of all bishops and metropolitans of the St. Thomas Christians in India. Unfortunately, the division of the territory of the St. Thomas Christians into two dioceses did not come into effect, because Mar Joseph was arrested and deported to Lisbon and then to Rome before the arrival of Mar Abraham. Therefore, as the Patriarch decided, Mar Abraham should have governed all the St. Thomas Christians. But when he reached Goa in 1568 with the testimonial letters of the Pope and those of his patriarch, he was arrested and detained in the Dominican monastery of Goa, because Archbishop George Temudo examined the letters and judged them to be either false or obtained by subterfuge.<sup>27</sup> A few months later he escaped from Goa with the help of some missionaries and reached his flock in Kerala (in 1568), where he was received with great affection and devotion.

### 3. The Orthodoxy of Mar Abraham and the Provincial Council of Goa in 1575

For some years Mar Abraham peacefully governed his flock. Afterwards the relationship between the Chaldean bishop and the portuguese religious and political authorities worsened mainly due to their attempts at the westernization of the St. Thomas Christians, which he resisted to a certain extent. Although the Archdiocese

26 J. Wicki, *Documenta Indica*, vol. XI, Romae 1970, 41; also in A. Rabbath, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire du Christianisme en Orient II*, Paris-Leipzig 1910, 434.

27 Cf. S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 86.

of Angamaly ( subject to the jurisdiction of the Chaldean patriarch) was not a suffragan of Goa, Mar Abraham was convoked to the provincial council of Goa in 1575 together with the two suffragan bishops of Cochin and Malacca, as if Abraham had been a " conprovincial" bishop. Abraham did not participate in the said provincial council, since he had no obligation to do so. Moreover, he was very much afraid of going to Goa, where he was twice arrested and detained. Although Abraham did not participate in the council, it decreed:

For the good of the Christianity of St. Thomas the Apostle, which is in the land of Malabar, it is found convenient that it should be governed by a Prelate presented by the King of Portugal and not by the Patriarch of Chaldea in order that it may be more easily freed from the abuses in which it is involved. Since the Archbishop of Angamaly, who governs these Christians, has no suffragan bishops, and cannot easily go to Chaldea owing to the great distance, this council requires His Holiness that he may come, and be obliged to come to the council of this province and to observe and make them observe its decrees, according to the council of Trent. For he is our close neighbour, and in this way, that Christianity will have great remedy. This council likewise requests His Holiness to oblige the bishop of China to come to this council as he is in this province and as there is great distance between China and the West, where his Patriarch resides; and also any other prelate who may be a neighbour of this province.<sup>28</sup>

Since Abraham knew well from the hostile attitude of the missionaries and especially from this decree the Portuguese strategy to suppress the jurisdiction of the Chaldean Patriarch in India and to make the Archdiocese of Angamaly a suffragan of Goa, he could have imagined the tragic consequences of his refusal to participate in the provincial council in 1575. Moreover Abraham was aware of the fact that Pope Pius IV, who knew him personally and who granted him recommendation letters, already died in 1565 and after a short pontificate of Pope Pius V (1565-1572) at that time Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585) was governing the universal Church. Therefore he acted very prudently. At the request of Mar Abraham, on 2 January 1576 the King of Cochin sent a letter to Pope Gregory XIII, in which he explained why Mar Abraham did not participate in the provincial council of Goa.

The King states:

Mar Abraham, the Archbishop of Angamaly, my vassal and prelate of the St. Thomas Christians in my Kingdom, informed me that he could not, as he was requested, be present at the provincial council convoked by the Archbishop of Goa on account of the wrongs and oppressions done towards him, and also because he was twice committed to prison. So he could not sit in the said council, and he asked me to inform Your Holiness that he remains an obedient son to the Holy Apostolic See, and that if your Holiness will assure him, he will be present at the council of these states and will

28 Provincial Council of Goa (1575), Session 3, decree 1, *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae*, appendix, Tom. 1, Lisbon 1872, 51.

communicate with Portuguese prelates and religious to the great utility of Christianity....<sup>29</sup>

On 21 December 1576 the Pope wrote a reply to the King of Cochin, highly praising and thanking the King for the acts "of kindness and gentleness, you have bestowed upon our sons, the Christians" and encouraging him to continue his good works. Then the Pope continues: "About the Archbishop of Angamaly we cannot decide anything since we are ignorant of the troubles that keep him back from going to the provincial council, or for what

reasons he had been twice committed to prison. When we shall come to be informed, we shall decide what is right and proper, nor shall we suffer him any more to be oppressed".<sup>30</sup> Being aware of the looming dangers, in 1577 Mar Abraham sent to Pope Gregory XIII, a new profession of faith, equal to the one he made before Pope Pius IV in 1565, in order to demonstrate his authentic Catholic faith and his attachment to the Holy See. We present here the full text of this profession of faith, considering its great importance and relevance for our argument.<sup>31</sup>

Ego Mar Abraham firma fide credo et profiteor omnia et singula, quae continentur in symbolo fidei quo sancta romana ecclesia utitur. Item credo in unum Deum patrem omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium, et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum filium Dei Unigenitum, et ex patre natum ante omnia saecula, Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum non factum, consubstantialem patri, per quem omnia facta sunt, qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem, descendit de caelis, et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine et homo factum est crucifixus etiam pro nobis, sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est, et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in caelum sedet ad dexteram patris, et iterum

I, Mar Abraham, with a firm faith believe and profess each and everything contained in the symbol of faith, which the holy Roman Church makes use of. So I believe in one God, the almighty Father, maker of heaven and earth, maker of all things, visible and invisible, and I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before time began, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, and was made man. For our sake, too, under Pontius Pilate, he was crucified, suffered (death), and was buried, and the third day he rose from the dead, according to the scriptures. He ascended to heaven, where

29. S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 76.

30. S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 77.

31. The profession of the Catholic faith signed by Mar Abraham can be found in the Vatican Archives, Arch. Arcis. S. Aug., Armar. XI, Caps. 3, n. 39; printed text in S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes...*, 83-85.

venturua est cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos cuius regni non erit finis, et Spiritum Sanctum Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex patre filioque procedit, qui locutus est per prophetas, et unam sanctam catholicam, et apostolicam ecclesiam, confiteor unum baptisma, in remissionem peccatorum, et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen. Apostolicas et ecclesiasticas traditiones reliquaque eiusdem ecclesiae observationes et constitutiones firmissime admitto, et amplector, item sacram scripturam iuxta eum sensum, quem tenuit, et tenet sancta mater ecclesia cuius est iudicare de vero sensu et interpretatione sacrarum scripturarum admitto, nec eam unquam nisi juxta unanimum consensum partum accipiam, et interpretabor, profiteor quopque septem esse vera et propria sacramenta novae legis a Jesu Christo Domino nostro instituta, atque ad salutem humani generis, item non omnia singulis necessaria, item baptismum, confirmationem, eucharistiam, penitentiam, extremam unctionem, ordinem et matrimonium, illaque gratiam conferre, et ex iis baptismum, confirmationem et ordinem, sine sacrilegio reiterari non posse. Receptos quoque, et adprobatos ecclesiae catholicae ritus, in supradictorum omnium sacramentorum solemnem administrationem recipio, et admitto: omnia et singula quae de peccato originali, et de justificatione, in sacrosancta Tridentina synoda diffinita, et declarata fuerunt amplector, et recipio. Profiteor pariter in missa offeri Deo, verum proprium et propitiatorium sacrificium, pro vivis et defunctis, atque in sanctissimo

he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son and who is adored and glorified together with the Father and the Son; he it was who spoke through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. I profess one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen. I most firmly admit and embrace the Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions and the rest of the observances and constitutions of the same Church; similarly I admit the S. Scriptures according to that sense which the holy mother Church held and holds, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the S. Scriptures, nor will I ever accept and interpret unless according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers; I also profess that the true and proper sacraments of the new law instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ are seven, and that all these are not necessary for the salvation of each and every one and that these are baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penitence, extreme unction, Orders and matrimony, and that these impart grace, and of these baptism, confirmation and Orders cannot be repeated without committing sacrilege. I also receive and admit the rites of the Catholic Church received and approved in the solemn administration of all the above mentioned sacraments. I embrace and receive each and every thing concerning original sin and justification defined and declared by the holy synod of Trent. Similarly I profess that in Mass is offered

eucharistiae sacramento esse, vere realiter et substantialiter corpus et sanguinem una cum anima, et divinitate Domini nostri, fierique conversionem totius substantiae panis in corpus et totius substantiae vini in sanguinem quam conversionem catholica ecclesia transubstantiationem appellat: fateor etiam sub altera tantum specie, totum atque integrum Christum verumque sacramentum sumi, constanter teneo purgatorium esse, animasque ibi detentas fidelium suffragiis iuari, similiter et sanctos una cum Christo regnantes, venerandos atque invocandos esse, eosque orationes Deo pro nobis offerre, atque eorum reliquias esse venerandas: firmissimo assero imagines Christi ac deiparae semper virginis, nec non aliorum sanctorum habendas, et retinendas esse, atque eis debitum honorem ac venerationem impertiendam; indulgentiam etiam potestatem a Christo in ecclesia relictam [sic] fuisse; illamque usu christiano populo maxime salutare esse, affirmo sanctam catholicam et apostolicam romanam ecclesiam omnium ecclesiarum matrem et magistratam agnosco, Romanoque pontifici beati Petri apostolorum principis successori, ac Jesu Christi vicario veram obedientiam spondeo ac iuro: Christi vicario veram obedientiam spondeo ac iuro: coetera item omnia, a sacris canonibus, oecumenicis conciliis, ac precipue a sacrosancta Tridentina synodo tradita, diffinita, et declarata, indubitanter recipio, atque profiteor, simulque contraria omnia, atque haereses quascumque ab ecclesia damnatas, et reiectas, et anathematizatas, ego pariter damno reicio et anathematizo: hanc veram

God, a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, and that in the most Holy Eucharist, there are truly, really and substantially the body and blood of our Lord together with his soul and divinity, and that a change is made of the whole substance of bread into his body and of the whole substance of wine into his blood, which change the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation. I also confess that under any of these species the whole and entire Christ and the true sacrament is received. I firmly hold that there is purgatory and that souls detained there, are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, and similarly that saints reigning with Christ are to be venerated and invoked and they offer God prayers in our behalf and that their relics are to be venerated; I most firmly assert that the images of Christ and the ever Virgin Mother of God and also of other saints are to be had and retained and that due honour and veneration are to be shown them; I affirm that the power of giving indulgences was left in the Church by Christ and that it is of very great and salutary help to the Christian people. I acknowledge the catholic, apostolic and Roman Church as the mother and mistress of all Churches. I profess and swear true obedience to the Roman Pontiff, the successor of blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, the vicar of Jesus Christ. I undoubtedly receive and profess similarly all the other things taught, declared and defined by the sacred canons and ecumenical councils and especially by the holy synod of Trent, and at the same time and in the same manner I condemn, reject and anathematize all contrary (doctrines) and whatever heresies, condemned, rejected and anathematized by

catholicam fidem extra quam nemo salvus esse potest, quam in praesenti sponte profiteor, et veraciter teneo eandem integram et inviolatam usque ad extremum vitae spiritum constantissime (deo adjuvante) retinere et confiteri atque a meis subditis, licet, illis quorum cura ad me in munere meo spectabit teneri, doceri et predicari, quantum in me erit, curaturum. Ego idem Mar Abraham spondeo, voveo atque iuro sic me Deus adjuvet, et haec sancta Dei evangelia.

Humilis Abraham Angamaliensis  
Archiepiscopus famulorum Sanctitatis  
vestrae servus.

Anno 1577.

In this profession of faith Mar Abraham once more unambiguously confesses the faith of the Holy Roman Church and admits the seven sacraments, the primacy of the pope and the superiority of the Roman Church as it was taught at that time. Furthermore, on 3 January 1578 Mar Abraham wrote another letter to Pope Gregory XIII, in which "Sanctissimis Beatitudinis Vestrae pedibus provolutus, eosque quanta possum submissione ac pietate religiosissime exosculatus" he informed Pope of this Catholic faith and true obedience to the Holy See and explained to him the reasons for his absence from the provincial council of Goa in 1575.<sup>32</sup>

the Church, and I will take care to retain and confess most firmly (by the help of God) this true catholic faith, outside which no one can be saved, which I now voluntarily profess and which I truly preserve entire and inviolate until the last breath of my life, and I will be careful that it be held, taught and professed also by my subjects, namely by those whose care I will have by virtue of my office. I the same Mar Abraham promises, vows and swears this; may God and these holy gospels of God so help me.

Humble Abraham of Angamaly,  
Archbishop, the servant of the servants of  
Your Holiness.

Year 1577.

The letter of the King of Cochin, as well as the profession of faith and the letter of Mar Abraham, induced Pope Gregory XIII to send three briefs. In the first letter dated 20 November 1578 and addressed to the Archbishop of Goa, the Pope states: "We wish that in the provincial synod you receive the Archbishop of Angamaly - for we wish that he too be present at that, and of this we have written to him-and act to the effect that he may come to know of your charity and humanity there as well as in other places. This, we think, behoves a brother, and would contribute to the propagation of the worship of Christ and the spread of Catholic faith..."<sup>33</sup> In the letter of 29

32 The complete text of this letter in Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea*...., 98-99.

33 S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes*....., 604

November 1578 the Pope advised Mar Abraham to participate in the future provincial councils of Goa, since he could not have convoked his own synods as he had no suffragans<sup>34</sup>. In the letter to Henry, the King of Portugal the Pope wrote on 3 December 1578: "We recommend to your Majesty also the venerable brother the Archbishop of angamaly who we hear to have been vexed by some; it will be very pleasing to us if you give orders to the viceroy and governors of India to protect him and not to suffer him to be hurt by any injury".<sup>35</sup> In accordance with this papal letter the King of Portugal gave precise orders to the Portuguese Viceroy in Goa to receive Mar Abraham with due honour and to treat him with dignity.<sup>36</sup>

### 3. The Orthodoxy of Mar Abraham in contrast to the Heretical Bishop Mar Simon.

Already on 25 august 1566 the Chaldean patriarch Mar Abdiso nominated Archdeacon George of Christ as the bishop of "Palur" (Palayur) and suffragan to Mar Abraham.<sup>37</sup> But it seems that the humility of the Archdeacon was such that he did not accept to be consecrated bishop. In fact on January 1579 Pope Gregory XIII conferred on the Archdeacon the power to govern the archdiocese of Angamaly if the See had become vacant by the death of Mar Abraham.<sup>38</sup>

Around this period a certain Simon arrived in Malabar claiming to be the Metropolitan of the St. Thomas Christians. Four letters written by Pope Gregory XIII on this occasion: the letter of 13 October 1578 to Enrico de Tavora, Archbishop of Goa, the brief of 4 March 1580 to Archdeacon George of Christ, in which the Pope confirms his election as the bishop of "Palur", and two letters (dated 12 February 1580 and 5 March 1580) addressed to the clergy and people of the Archdiocese of Angamaly, confirm directly or indirectly the Orthodoxy of Mar Abraham.<sup>39</sup> The main intention of all these four letters was to encourage the authorities in Goa, especially the clergy and the people in Malabar to oppose and expel the heretical bishop Simon from Malabar and to obey only the catholic bishop Mar Abraham. In the fourth letter the Pope admonishes the clergy and people in Malabar:

We, then being solicitous for your salvation and tranquillity of your Church, exhort and advise you and by virtue of the power committed to us by Christ, also order you not to suffer yourselves to be infected by that pest ( the reference is to the activities of Simon), but evade it by all means; flee from his words and sermons; fear him as the enemy and eradicator of the Catholic faith, your salvation and the glory of Christ; eject him out of your community and gathering, permit him not

34 S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes*...., 605

35 S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes*...., 606.

36 See the document in Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea*...., 195.

37 J. Wicki, *Documenta Indica*, vol.VII, Rome 1962, 703-705

38 Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea*...., 195.

39 The first three letter can be found in Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea*...., pp. 192-194, 196-197, 198- 199 and the fourth letter in S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes*...., 607-608.

to dwell among you nor to remain in your places. The same you should do with the rest of the heretics and schismatics lest corrupted by their pestiferous doctrine and contagion you should perish. *Be you therefore obedient to your lord Archbishop Abraham and also to George the Bishop of "Palur", and live steadfast in the sincerity of Faith, in the simplicity of morals and in the unity of the holy mother the Church. Thus you attain to that eternal felicity and glory which God has prepared and reserved for those who would live piously and holy...*<sup>40</sup>

Here one can find how earnestly the Pope advises the clergy and the Christian faithful to be obedient only to the Catholic bishop Mar Abraham and to the bishop elect Archdeacon George of Christ in contrast to the heretics who should not be even permitted to dwell among them, but be expelled from their community.

#### 4. The Orthodoxy of Mar Abraham and the Provincial Council of Goa in 1585

We have already seen that after the second provincial council of Goa, in 1578 the Pope advised Mar Abraham to participate in the provincial councils of Goa since he had no possibility to convoke such a council nor to participate in the Synod

of Chaldea. The Pope also wrote letters to the Archbishop of Goa and the King of Portugal asking them to treat the Archbishop of Angamaly with fraternal charity and due respect. In harmony with the directives of the Pope, Archbishop Vincent de Fonesca officially convoked Mar Abraham to the third provincial council of Goa, which opened on 9 June 1585. Mar Abraham, who was not a suffragan of Goa and who had no juridical obligation to participate in the provincial councils, on account of his heroic obedience and filial devotion to the Roman Pontiff, did go to Goa, for him the most dangerous place in the world, where he was twice arrested and detained by the Portuguese authorities.

The third Session of the council, which contains ten decrees, is completely dedicated to "Das couzas do arcebispado de Angamale, e christandade, que chamao de S. Thome, nas partes do Malavar".<sup>41</sup> We indicate only the content of some decrees which is relevant to our theme. In this council, again Mar Abraham made the profession of faith, in which he had to confess the christological and mariological definitions of the ecumenical councils of Ephesus in 432 and Chalcedon in 451.<sup>42</sup>

40 S. Giamil, *Genuinae Relationes*....., 608.

41 The decrees can be found in *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum*, Appendix I, Lisbon 1872, 73-76.

42 "Primeiramente encomenda este Concilio 3<sup>o</sup> ao arcebispo de Angamale D. Mar Abraha, que a confissao, e protestacao, que fez em Roma em tempo do Papa Pio IV de feliz memoria, e agora aqui neste Concilio tornou a fazer, ordene que se faca pelo clero, e povo de toda aquella christandade, e que em especial creao, e confessem como em Christo nosso Senhor ha duas naturezas divina e humana mas huma so pessoa, e suposto divino, e verdadeiro, e substancial, e que a Santissima Virgem Maria nossa Senhora he propria, e verdadeira May de Deos, e como tal deve ser chamada, venerada, e honrada, pois concebeo, e pario a Jesus Christo nosso Senhor, verdadeiro Does, e Homem, e que anathematize todos os hereges, que contra isso forem, e sao em especial honestos, e a todos os seus companheiros, e sequazes, e todo o mais, que no Concilio Ephesino e Calcedonense acerca disso se determinou, e que os recebao, venerem, e guardem como catholicos, e sanctos, que sao; e encomenda este Concilio muito ao dito arcebispo assim o faca crer, guardar, e protestar, e que todos os que achar, que contra isso sentem, e crem, os castigue como a verdadeiros hereges, que sao, e nao podendo elle por si fazelo, denuncie delles ao metropolitano, ou inquisidor, para elles fazerem nisso o que mais for servico do nosso Senhor, e da sancta Igreja de Roma, cuja fe protestarao, e sao obrigados a crer e guardar". Session 3, decree 1, *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum*, Appendix 1, 73.

Thus he once more publicly and solemnly demonstrated his orthodoxy and sound doctrinal position in the presence of the Archbishop of Goa and his suffragans. The Council ordered that the Roman ritual, the Roman Missal, the Roman Breviary, and the Roman Pontifical were to be translated into Chaldean (Syriac) for the use of the St. Thomas Christians:

Moreover, for the same reason, it seemed to this Council that, since for the time being Latin could not be utilized, the Roman Missal and Roman Breviary, reformed according to the order of the Council of Trent, are to be translated into Chaldean (Syriac); and that from the Roman Pontifical and the Roman Sacerdotal (Ritual) are to be translated those parts necessary for conferring or giving (sacred) Orders, and for administering the sacraments....<sup>43</sup>

Decree 8 stipulates that an able assistant is to be appointed to help Mar Abraham, who was old and sick. "And since it is hardly useful to enact laws, if they were not executed, - to that scope and especially for helping that Christianity in temporal and spiritual matters, and to execute the above mentioned dispositions and other matters which are retained useful for the service of the Lord and for the good of that Christianity - it pleased to the Council to send together with the said Archbishop (Mar Abraham) an erudite and authoritative religious person, who could help the

archbishop in everything or in the above mentioned matters. The archbishop himself considered it opportune not only because of his advanced age and ailments (infirmities), but also because he has very little familiarity with the things of the Latin Rite. Hence it is natural that he - as recommends the Council - utilizes the services of the said religious person, who will go with him both for the execution of the said matters and for the visitation of his diocese, so that in everything that must be done which will render more service to our Lord and will be useful to the greater good of that Church and Christianity".<sup>44</sup> In accordance with this decree Fr. Francis Ros SJ, who arrived in India in 1583 and was professor of Syriac at the Jesuit seminary of Vaipicotta since 1587, was appointed as an assistant to Mar Abraham, especially for implementing the decisions of the Synod.

The tenth decree of the Council perhaps the most important:

Since some persons have come from Chaldea to this Church and this Christianity and have intruded themselves as bishops, although in truth they were not so, afterwards appeared, and have caused in it schism and troubles, and as the same thing happen again, it appears to the council that henceforth no man can be received as a bishop or Catholic Prelate, or approved, unless he first present letters addressed to the bishop of Goa as Primate of India and the East; and unless these letters come from His Holiness or from a

43 Session 3, decree 7, *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum*, Appendix 1, 75.

44 Session 3, decree 8 *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum*, Appendix 1, 75.

Patriarch who is Catholic and giving obedience to the Roman Church and is approved by it, as formerly did the archbishop Mar Abraham, when he came, being appointed Archbishop of Angamaly by Pope Pius IV of happy memory, and he who does not present such letters will be regarded as an intruder and as such will be dragged out of the Church. The council humbly begs His Holiness to approve and order the patriarch of Chaldea to whom this pertains to issue orders likewise as this is most important for the good of this Christianity and the holy Roman Church.<sup>45</sup>

Ironically Archbishop Mar Joseph (who arrived in Goa accompanied by papal Nuncio Ambrosius Buttigeg) and Mar Abraham (on the occasion of his second arrival), who had presented letters of the Pope and the Chaldean Catholic patriarch to the Archbishop of Goa, fulfilled all the procedures prescribed in this decree even before its enactment. Notwithstanding this they were arrested and deported. Moreover, this decree publicly acknowledges that Mar Abraham, whom the Portuguese authorities had twice arrested and detained, was not an "intruder" to be dragged out of the Church as they had done, but a Catholic bishop who came "being appointed Archbishop of Angamaly by Pope Pius IV of happy memory", and who presented letters from His Holiness and the Patriarch to the Archbishop of Goa. Lastly, this decree testifies to the fact that the Portuguese were aware of the existence of a Catholic patriarch in Chaldea, who

was in full communion with the Roman Pontiff and who had the right to nominate bishops in India. In brief, the decrees of the fourth provincial council of Goa categorically acknowledged the Catholic faith of Mar Abraham and his canonical appointment in contrast to the "intruders".

### 5. The Accusations against Mar Abraham and His Death as a Catholic Bishop

From the time of the constitution of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Goa on 4 February 1557, the Portuguese political project was to extinguish the Eastern rite in India, terminate the jurisdiction of the Chaldean Patriarch, suppress the metropolitan status of Angamaly and to incorporate it in the Archdiocese of Goa as its suffragan as well as to extend the patronage of the Portuguese King over the St. Thomas Christians as well.<sup>46</sup> They knew well that as long as the Eastern rite prevailed in South India, it was not possible to achieve their main goal, namely the annexation of the Archdiocese of Angamaly to the Archdiocese of Goa as its suffragan. So they strove their best to substitute the Eastern rite with the Latin rite. As we have seen above, such attempts obtained canonical approval in the third provincial council of Goa in 1585, in which Mar Abraham was also present. He also signed the acts and decrees of the council, since it was not possible for him to do otherwise in a Portuguese military and religious centre, where he was twice arrested and imprisoned.

45 Session 3, decree 10 *Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum*, Appendix 1, 75.

46 For details, cf. P. Pallath, "Were the St. Thomas Christians in India Nestorians..." 62-69

In order to satisfy the missionaries present in Kerala, during his long governance Mar Abraham permitted several westernizations such as the administration of Confirmation according to the Latin discipline, introduction of the Gregorian Calendar, the prohibition of the married clergy to preside over the eucharistic celebration, the holy Communion under the species of bread only according to the Latin tradition, the permission for the Jesuits to erect a seminary in Vaipicotta for the western formation of the St. Thomas Christians (in 1587) etc.<sup>47</sup> But it was evident that no Eastern Catholic bishop in the world, who had to be faithful to his patriarch and to his ecclesial heritage, could have implemented fully the decisions of the third provincial council of Goa, which in fact required the complete substitution of Eastern rite with the Latin rite. Moreover, it was against the general policy of the Holy See (even of that time), which demanded only the correction of what it considered "errors" in the liturgical books of those Eastern Christians who had come in to full communion with Rome, but not the substitution of their Eastern rite with the Latin rite.<sup>48</sup>

Whenever the bishops of the St. Thomas Christians made any restraint or objection

to the Portuguese project of complete westernization, they were accused of heresy and were deported to Goa and then to Lisbon to be examined by the Inquisitors, operating in those centres. The consequence of Mar Abraham's reluctance to comply with the decrees of the Goan council concerning the introduction of the Latin rite among the St. Thomas Christians was catastrophic. Francis Ros SJ, who was appointed assistant to Mar Abraham by the council and the other missionaries in Malabar initiated a campaign against the Chaldean Archbishop, who was accused of heresy, simony and even immorality. In 1586 -87 Francis Ros SJ examined a few Chaldean books present in Kerala and composed a treatise entitled : *De Erroribus Nestorianorum qui in hac India Orientali versantur*, extracting from those books what he considered "Nestorian heretical doctrines" and translating them into Latin.<sup>49</sup> On 30 December 1594 he wrote another more detailed denunciation of Mar Abraham, entitled "Enfomacao do Prelado do Serra"<sup>50</sup> In both of these documents the Chaldean bishop is presented as a disobedient and notorious Nestorian heretic to be deposed and punished. Similarly many other Jesuit missionaries wrote to Rome denouncing Mar Abraham. For example, Fr Abrahamo di Giorgio SJ,

47 Cf. J. Kollaparambil, "The Impact of the Synod of Diamper on the Ecclesial Identity of the St. Thomas Christians", G. Nedungatt, ed., *The Synod of Diamper Revisited*, Rome 2001, 156 - 159.

48. The Maronite (1215), Chaldean (1553), Syrian (1663), Melchite (1729), Armenian (1742) and the Coptic (1895) patriarchates which renewed communion with Rome were not asked to introduce the Latin rite in their Churches. For details, cf. W. DE VRIES, *Rom und die Patriarchate des Ostens*, Freiburg- Munchen 1963, 11183-222.

49 Francis Ros S.J. *De Erroribus Nestorianorum qui in hac India Orientali versantur*, annotated by I. Hausherr, *Orientalia Christiana*, vol. XI (1), n. 40, Rome 1928.

50 The original portuguese version in J. Wicki, *Documenta Indica*, vol. XVI, Romae 1984, 1029-1039; English trans. in G. Nedungatt, ed., *The Synod of Diamper Revisited*, Rome 2001, 285-293.

who stayed only a few months in Kerala, wrote two letters (on 13 October and 15 December 1593) to the Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva in Rome in order to inform him that "the Archbishop of this Christianity is a Nestorian heretic, who is worse than an infidel and who leads a bestial and carnal life".<sup>51</sup>

Pope Clement VIII was also informed that an Mar Abraham had relapsed into the errors of the Nestorian heresy and he did not even permit the Chaldean books filled with the same errors to be emended and corrected. Authorization was also requested from the Pope to deport Mar Abraham to Goa for conducting a trial against him regarding the accusations indicated above. Finally on 27 January 1595, induced by the Portuguese authorities, Pope Clement VIII (Pope Pius IV, who knew Mar Abraham and who granted him testimonial letters had already died in 1559) issued a letter authorizing the Archbishop of Goa to conduct a trial against Mar Abraham and to send the acts of the process to Rome for decision. The relevant part of the letter reads:

...with this missive we entrust to you our brother and give order that you inquire diligently into the life, morals and doctrine of Mar Abraham and from this inquiry if you find him guilty regarding the above, you shall order him and make him come to Goa and thither you shall keep him in safe and distinguished custody and transmit to us and the Apostolic See an authentic copy of the trial to be conducted by you, so that

after the process itself has been diligently inspected and examined we may be able to settle the case of the Archbishop Mar Abraham as justice requires.<sup>52</sup>

Although information was gathered about the Chaldean bishop suffering from old age and sickness, he was not deported to Goa and no formal trial was conducted by the Goan Inquisition, because it was impossible to prove the accusations against him, who more than thrice publicly and solemnly professed the Catholic faith and who always acted according to the directives of the Roman Pontiff and the Holy See. The official written communications between Mar Abraham and the Roman Pontiffs are so abundant that in this article only a few important ones are cited.<sup>53</sup> All such documents demonstrate the indubitable, explicit and full communion of Mar Abraham with the Roman Pontiff and his profound veneration towards the successors of St. Peter. The accusations of heresy against Mar Abraham, made by those missionaries, who turned out to be his enemies, were never proved by any Inquisition or ecclesiastical court. Since the trial permitted by the Pope Clement VIII was never conducted, it was not possible to "transmit to us and the Apostolic See an authentic copy of the trial to be conducted by you, so that after the process itself has been diligently inspected and examined, we may be able to settle the case of the Archbishop Mar Abraham as Justice requires". It is evident that no Catholic bishop becomes non Catholic

51 J. Wicki, *Documenta Indica*, vol. XVI, Romae 1984, 174-176, 560-567.

52 This letter can be found in Archivio Brevi Apostolici, vol. 248, f. 245; printed versions, *Subsidium ad Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae*..., 11; Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea*..., 252-253.

53 For complete documentation see S. Giamil, *Genuine Relations*... and Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea*... the second part of the book dedicated to documents, pp. 141-272.

only because his enemies have accused him of heresy and schism. Mar Abraham, the last Chaldean Catholic metropolitan of the St. Thomas Christians, died on 3 January 1597, when he was 90 years old. Despite continuous vexations and manifold tribulations, perpetrated by the Portuguese religious and political authorities, the saintly bishop persisted in the Catholic faith until his last breath, always maintaining communion with the Roman Pontiff.

### Concluding Remarks

The Portuguese missionaries and political authorities had accused Mar Abraham and the St. Thomas Christians of heresy and schism, because they considered it the best means to realize their political projects: the eradication of the Eastern rite from India as well as the suppression of the metropolitan status of the See of St. Thomas Christians and its incorporation in the Archdiocese of Goa, under the Portuguese Padroado. In order to be faithful to His Majesty, the King of Portugal and to his cause, the Portuguese bishops and missionaries ignored the letters of the popes and disobeyed their orders, by arresting and deporting Catholic bishops, came to India, even accompanied by Latin Catholic Papal Nuncio, Bishop Ambrosius Buttigieg. The Portuguese had their own political reasons for perpetrating such inhuman acts. But today one can find not even any political justification for stigmatizing those bishops as heretics.

Modern studies have demonstrated

that even the Church of the East, the so-called Nestorian Church, never professed the heresy called "Nestorianism", but confessed the authentic Catholic Christological and mariological doctrines. The Common Christological declaration, signed by Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV (the Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East) on 11 November 1994 is a solemn confirmation of this fact.<sup>54</sup> In this Declaration the Pope and the Patriarch affirmed that the controversies of the past and "the divisions brought about in this way were due in large part to misunderstandings" and that "they can indeed, from now on, proclaim together before the world their common faith in the mystery of incarnation".<sup>55</sup> They acknowledged that they profess the same unique faith in the mystery of Christ and recognized that the Marian formulae of both Churches (Assyrian Church - Mary "the Mother of Christ our God and Saviour"; Catholic Church - Mary "the Mother of God and also "the Mother of Christ") are legitimate and rightful expressions of the same faith.<sup>56</sup> In this context it is disconcerting that even at present neocolonialist servile attitude, inability or inertia to consult original documents and culpable ignorance of historical facts are still provoking the imagination of some people to propagate calumnies against saintly chaldean bishops, who had sacrificed their lives for the pastoral care of the Christian faithful in the far away regions of India.

<sup>54</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995) 685-687.

<sup>55</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995) 685.

<sup>56</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995) 686.

# THE STRUCTURE OF THE ANAPHORA OF ADDAI AND MARI IN THE SYRO-MALABAR QURBANA

Dr Thomas Mannoorampampil

One of the great merits of the 1986 and 1989 restored texts of the anaphora of Addai and Mari in the Syro-Malabar Qurbana is that it regained its traditional structure and theology by abandoning the wrong structure of the 1962 and 1968 taksas.

## The Texts of AM

We give here the text of the anaphora from the third g'hantha onwards for the sake of comparison:

Third g'hantha- And with these heavenly hosts we give you thanks, O Lord, we also your weak, frail and miserable servants because you have done us great favours which cannot be repaid.....in the overflowing mercies of your grace.

Third Qanona- For all your helps and graces towards us we render you glory....

Fourth kussapa- O Lord, God Almighty receive this Qurbana....

Fourth G'hantha- My Lord, in your abundant and ineffable mercies, make a good and acceptable memorial of the virgin Mary, Mother of God, of all the just and righteous fathers who have found great favour in your presence, in the commemoration of the Body and Blood of your Christ which we offer you upon the pure and holy altar as you have taught

us. And grant us your tranquility and peace all the days of the world that all the inhabitants of the earth may know you, ...seal of holy baptism.

And we also, my Lord, your weak, frail and miserable servants who are gathered together in your name, and who stand before you at this time and have received by tradition the example which is from you, rejoicing and glorifying, commemorating and celebrating this great, awesome, holy, vivifying and divine mystery of the passion, the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Epiclesis- O my Lord, may your Holy Spirit come down.

Proclamation of the deacon: In silence and reverence you stand and pray: peace be with us.

Epiclesis continues: And dwell in this Qurbana.....

Qanona: And for all this great and admirable dispensation towards us we will thank and glorify you unceasingly in your church redeemed by the precious Blood of your Christ. We will do this with confident and cheerful countenance.

-Offering glory .....ever and ever .Amen.

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## The texts of AM in the 1962 and 1986 taksas

| 1962 taksa                     | 1986 taksa                        |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Third g'hantha              | a Third G'hantha(first sentence ) |
| 2. Words of Institution        | b.Introduction to the IN          |
| 3.fourth g'hantha(second part) | c. IN                             |
| 4. Qanona II                   | d.Third G'hantha(second part)     |
| 5. IV kussapa                  | e.Qanona I                        |
| 6. IV g'hantha*first part)     | f.IV kussapa                      |
| 7 Epiclesis                    | g .IV g'hantha (first Part)       |
| 8 Qanona 1                     | h.IV g'hantha (second part)       |
|                                | i.Epiclesis                       |
|                                | j. Qanona II                      |

on AM seemingly on the basis of latin theology.His argument runs thus: The second part of the fourth g'hantha( Nr.3) and the second Qanona(Nr.4) constitute the anamnesis. Epiclesis was later inserted into it.

After a comparative analysis of the epiclesis of

## Traditional Structure

The anaphoral structure of the 1986 and 1989 taksas corresponds to the traditional anaphoral structure given in the non-restored taksa, in all the commentaries of the Fathers, in all the available manuscripts and printed versions of the Chaldean and Nestorian texts of the Qurbana: Dialogue prayer, second kussapa,second g'hantha, qanona(crying..) third kussapa, request for prayer,third g'hantha, Qanona, proclamation of the deacon, IV kussapa, request for prayer,IV g'hantha, epiclesis and qanona II.Introduction to the IN and the IN are additions to the original structure of AM.

## New Structure

It seems that the 1962 restored taksa adopted a new structure which B,Botte proposed as original as a result of his study

AM with those of Theodore, Nestorius and the West Syrian anaphoras Botte concludes that it has a very archaic character and has influenced other epicleses in the very early stage of their development. Like the epiclesis of St.Basil it speaks of the coming of the Spirit whereas others mention the sending of the Spirit .It can be seen that the idea of sanctification is absent from all others except from the anaphora of Gregory Nazianzen. The prayer which follows the epiclesis in Basil resembles the one found in AM:" ut inveniamus misericordiam et gratiam cum omnibus sanctis, qui a saeculis tibi placuerunt."<sup>1</sup> As in St.Basil, the end of sanctification is not indicated and the prayer for the fruits of communion is not clearly separated within the epiclesis. The Phrase "on us" is absent as in Hippolytus Therefore he concludes

<sup>1</sup> Anton Hanggi- Irmgard Pahl *Prex Eucharistica*(Fribourg 1968) 239

that the epiclesis in its earliest form represents an intermediary stage between Hippolytus and St.Basil.<sup>2</sup> He also observes that it has the same Semitic characteristics as the rest of the anaphora. It is not an importation from the Greek liturgy but represents the most ancient Syro-oriental tradition.<sup>3</sup> Dix, Botte and Ratcliff maintain the possibility that its present position could be a later transference from somewhere else in the rite,<sup>4</sup> which interrupts the context that sets it. If it is omitted para (j) is directly connected with para(h.) so as to constitute one single prayer of the anamnesis.<sup>5</sup> They believe that it was posited in the present position in order to bring the Eucharistic prayer of AM into line with the Greek fourth century development.<sup>6</sup>

In an attempt to prove the original unity of para h with para j Botte argues that the great and admirable economy of para j cannot refer to the pardon of offences and the hope of resurrection in the epiclesis but to the salutary facts: passion, death, burial and resurrection, which terminate para h. The economy of para j which corresponds to the Greek word *oikonomia* signifying the whole salvific work of Christ, is intended to reassume the salutary events

mentioned in para h and is immediately connected with them. To corroborate this close connection between them, he refers to the significance of "this" which is used as an adjective of the word economy.

The peculiarity of the structure becomes evident if AM is compared with Theodore and Nestorius

| AM           | Theodore, Nestorius |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Intercession | Anamnesis           |
| Anamnesis 1  | Intercession        |
| Epiclesis    | Epiclesis           |
| Anamnesis II |                     |

Although intercession in Theodore and Nestorius has been influenced by AM, it comes before the anamnesis in AM, whereas it appears in Theodore and Nestorius between the anamnesis and the epiclesis. One may then ask why the redactors of Theodore and Nestorius followed another order if they knew the actual structure of AM. It is quite reasonable to assume that they retained their earlier place as the vestige of the most ancient usage, and therefore, it can be concluded that the fourth g'hantha originally followed the anamnesis and that the original order of AM exists in Theodore and Nestorius:

<sup>2</sup> B. Botte, *L'Épiclese dans les liturgies syriennes orientales*, in SE 6(1954)48-72; C. Ratcliff, *The Original Form of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari: A Suggestion*, in JTS 30 (1929)29

<sup>3</sup> B. Botte, *Problèmes de l'anaphore syrienne des apôtres Addai et Mari*, in OS 10(1965)98-100

<sup>4</sup> Id. 98-100, Ratcliff, *The Original Form* 29, G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London 1970) 183

<sup>5</sup> E. C. Ratcliff, *The Original Form* 29; B. Botte, *L'anaphore chaldéenne des apôtres*, in OCP(15(1949) 98-100; L. Bouyer, *Eucharist* 152; I. H. Dalmais, *The Eastern Liturgies* 91.

<sup>6</sup> E. C. Ratcliff, *The Original Form* 29; L. Bouyer, *The Eucharist, Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Notre Dame 1968) 152; I. H. Dalmais, *The Eastern Liturgies* (London 1960) 91

anamnesis, intercession And epiclesis. He then explains the present structure of AM as a reconstruction according to the West Syrian anaphora.

Botte contends that since the most striking anomaly in AM was the separation between the anamnesis and the epiclesis, the anamnesis was transposed and combined with the epiclesis which, instead of following the anamnesis, was inserted within it. Epiclesis in the East Syrian liturgy is a secondary element added to the already constructed anaphora, and therefore, should properly follow the prayer of intercession as in Theodore and Nestorius.

### The Problem of the IN

The present text of AM lacks the IN.<sup>7</sup> Botte argues that the very presence of anamnesis in the Qurbana is a proof for its presence in its original text. One of the characteristics of the typical anamnesis is that it immediately follows the IN and is immediately connected with it by a transitional sentence: "And when you are gathered together in my name do what I have done in memory of me". Anamnesis is a natural development of this command. An anaphora, which contains anamnesis, should also possess the IN. Botte seems to follow here the principle of H.Lietzmann:

"No anamnesis without an Institution".<sup>8</sup> According to Botte 'and we also' possesses all the necessary characteristics of an anamnesis and therefore constitutes an indirect proof for the presence of IN in the original structure of AM.<sup>9</sup>

An important thing to be explained is the apparent lack of connection between the anamnesis ('and we also') and the preceding third g'hantha or the fourth g'hantha. They remain detached from the anamnesis which itself displays a lack of connection with them in its opening sentence 'and we also'. No one begins a prayer by saying: 'and we also' and so it betrays a hiatus<sup>10</sup>. He tries to solve this difficulty through a comparison between the IN of Theodore and the 'and we also' of AM which brings him to the conclusion that the beginning of the anamnesis of AM is like the conclusion of the IN of Theodore and logically follows from it.

There are two hypotheses regarding the source of the IN. The first is that the redactor inserted a Narrative in the anaphora which lacked it formerly. The second holds that he found it in his source and reproduced it with some modifications.<sup>11</sup> For lack of proof on the borrowing from Bible and other liturgies it is well to note the fourth century witness

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Mannooranparampil, The Anaphora and the Poat-Anaphora of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana (Romae 1984) 67-102

<sup>8</sup> H.Lietzmann, Mass and Lord's Supper (Leiden 1953) 50-55

<sup>9</sup> B.Botte, Problèmes de l'anaphore syrienne 101

<sup>10</sup> Id., L'Anaphore chaldéenne des apôtres 270

<sup>11</sup> Id., 270-272

of the Persian Church reflected especially in the words of St.Ephrem who writes: "And when you are gathered together in my name in the church in every place, do in memory of me what I have done".<sup>12</sup> It is obvious that the words "when you are gathered together in my name" of the anaphora is associated with the phrase from St.Ephrem and not with the words of the anaphora of Theodore: "When you are gathered together in memory of me"<sup>13</sup>. Now it is obvious how the beginning of the anamnesis is suited to offer a close link with the kind of Narration given by St.Ephrem and therefore it can be concluded that this anamnesis was composed so as to adopt itself to this sort of the IN<sup>14</sup>.

For Botte, the second qanona: "And for all this great and admirable dispensation.." is the last part of the so-called anamnesis: "And we also". The economy or dispensation of which it speaks is the economy of redemption. Since the second g'hantha, third g'hantha, account of Institution and the anamnesis are a resume of this economy, the qanona which refers to the economy should immediately follow the anamnesis and marks the end of the consecratory part. He seems to have been led by the supposition that the fourth g'hantha and epiclesis are of later origin and are not needed for consecration.

### Botte is refuted

The discovery of Mar Esaya text has considerably weakened the position of B.Botte. Its "and we also" lacks the phrase "in my name" on which he based the argument to link the anamnesis with the IN. Although its absence may be possibly be explained that it is a mere textual dislocation, the very evidence nullifies Botte's reconstructed IN.

If the reconstruction of Ratcliff or Dix is accepted the similarity between Theodore's Institution Narrative and the anamnesis of AM ("and we also") also disappears. Dix eliminated from "and we also" "rejoicing and praising and exalting and commemorating and performing this great and fearful and holy and life-giving and divine mystery ...Jesus Christ" since it is of secondary origin. Chaldean Patri 209 and Mar Esaya text add a new participle "praising" before "performing". This indicates that these participles of similar meaning were added to the text at different times according to the Semitic style. Ratcliff takes away from this para. "great and fearful and holy and life-giving and divine". Macomber also prefers a simple reading of the text in his critical study of Mar Esaya<sup>15</sup> "Holy and divine" are missing in Mar Esaya text. Although "awesome" appears in Mar

<sup>12</sup> Sermo IV, in *Hebdimadam Sanctam*, in Lamy, I, 425-426

<sup>13</sup> B.Botte, *Problèmes de l'anamnèse*, in JEH 5(1954) 17-18; Id. *Problèmes de l'anaphore syrienne* 101.

<sup>14</sup> Id, *Problèmes de l'anamnèse* 18; Id., *L'anaphore chaldéenne des apôtres* 274

<sup>15</sup> W.E.Macomber, *the Oldest Known Text of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari*, in OCP 32(1966) 369

Esaya its absence in Diarbekir hudra , Mardin Ritual and Berlin 41 suggest that it also may not be original .These proofs destroy Botte;s contention that “ great, awesome ,holy and divine are found both in the IN of Theodore and in “and we also”.Sarrar omits fully the sentence “and we also” which Botte characterizes as the first anamnesis,while it retains the doxology which he qualifies as the second anamnesis.

Engberding has convincingly proved that the whole para “and we also” is of secondary origin and was later added to the preceding part of the of the fourth g’hantha as a continuation of the intercession leading up to the epiclesis. Therefore it is not anamnesis but an extension of the fourth g’hantha<sup>16</sup> The nonanamntic character and the comparatively later origin of the prayer “and we also” invalidates the basic argument of Botte that the presence of the anamnesis in AM is an incontestable evidence for the original existence of the words of Institution in it. Arguing from the same principle of Botte , Engberding and Dix now contend that the words of Institution never belonged to the original stratum of the anaphora.

Raes S.J. holds that it constitutes a preparation to the epiclesis. The matter becomes clearer when para. “and we also” is compared with the prayer introducing epiclesis in Nestorius and Theodore. In the anaphora of Nestorius, there is the following sentence after the intercession:

“We, therefore, O Lord, Your small, frail and miserable servants ,who were far off...which renews all the creatures .And may ,O my Lord, the grace of the Holy Spirit come..”. “Therefore” is not a conclusion of the previous sentence but a mere enclitic, a vague link with the preceding sentence. This is a clear allusion that “and we also” in AM has the same function as in the anaphora of Nestorius. In this sentence of Nestorius there is “servants” with three adjectives and a relative clause, which shows that the priest stands before God and performs the liturgical service. This theme comes close to that of AM. Although the object of the petition in Nestorius is not expressed , it is implied in the invocation of the Holy Spirit which follows it. In the same way the para “and we also” of AM introduces the epiclesis. In the anaphora of Theodore, the prayer. “We beseech you” is the petition which introduces the following epiclesis . It is not connected with the preceding prayer , because the rubric “and continues” indicates that the priest begins a new prayer. The author of para “and we also” wanted to emphasize here “that the priest at the moment , stood before God, before the altar to accomplish an important rite, a rite which had come from the Lord and had reached us through a continuous process of tradition, a rite which recalled the death and the resurrection of Christ... It is the rite of the Lord’s Supper.”<sup>17</sup> Here arises a difficulty that the

<sup>16</sup> H. Engberding , Zum anaphorischen Fürbittgebet der ostsyrischen Liturgie der Apostle Addai und Mari, in OC 41(1957) 114-115

<sup>17</sup> A. Raes, The Enigma of the Chaldean and Malabar Anaphora of the Apostles, in Vellian , the Malabar Church, OCA 186(Roma 1970) 5

prayers of Theodore and Nestorius have a main verb and include a petition to God before the epiclesis, whereas the prayers of AM lacks both these elements. Raes would suggest that these words were known by heart by all the celebrants and that the first scribe omitted them in his copy. This is a facile a solution. What is of interest to him is not the grammatical construction but the meaning of the prayer. Although it includes no petition, his conclusion seems to be reasonable, provided his interpretation of the para. 8 is admitted and consecratory value is ascribed to the epiclesis. The close parallel between para 8 and the prayers preceding the epiclesis in Theodore and Nestorius evokes his conclusion.

It is well to examine the sequence of ideas from the fourth g'hantha till the epiclesis in order to see whether this transposition is justifiable. The fourth g'hantha reads: "My Lord, in your abundant and ineffable mercies,... as you have taught us....He our Lord and our God came and in His life-giving gospel taught us.." The second part of the same g'hantha begins: "And we also, my Lord, your weak, frail and miserable servants.." "We" here includes priest and the assembly as it means in the third g'hantha where the same usage occurs: "and we also Thy weak, frail and miserable servants." "We" has the same meaning also in the fourth g'hantha. Thus the whole usage, "and we also" seems to refer immediately to the command of

Christ, "as you taught us", and to the oblation of Christ,"in commemoration of Thy Body and blood."

Taken in this context "And we also" has then a double meaning according to L.Ligier.<sup>18</sup> "And we from our part" remember Thy command and "we again" offer this oblation in commemoration of Thy body and blood.

The preceding part "My Lord,in your abundant.." which deals with the remembrance which God makes is related here to the anamnesis which "we" make. Thus two commemorations -that which God is requested to make and that which we make- are in agreement. This sequence of ideas is clearer if a study is made of sarrar in which "you O Lord" is immediately followed by "remember". "Who are gathered together in your name" can be referred to the preceding one "as you taught us"which alludes to the command of Christ to make His anamnesis (1 Cor.11:24;Lk 12:19) or to the promise of Christ, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name,I shall be there with them"(Mt. 18:20). Further, one can notice the proximity of "and we also" to the epiclesis. If Mt 18: 20 and 1 Cor. 11:24 are here associated, the general idea of the whole of epiclesis and "and we also" would be:according to the Chaldean tradition, Christ's salvific mysteries are celebrated when invocation is made in the epiclesis in accordance with the command of the Lord to gather together

<sup>18</sup> L.Ligier, *Magnae Orationis Eucharisticae seu anaphorae origio et significatio* (Romae 1964) 241

in His name, to invoke His name and to commemorate His passion. Therefore Botte's attempt to prove the original presence of IN is not crowned with success.

## Epiclesis

The maranatha in the Eucharistic prayer of Didache is the most ancient form of epiclesis available.<sup>19</sup> In Saraphion we find an invocation of the Word (logos epiclesis) over the bread and wine. These forms of epiclesis are related to the Jewish idea of Shekinah or the presence of God. We read in the Abodah prayer of Shemoneh Esreh: "In your love accept the sacrifices and prayers of Israel with good will...and may our eyes see your return to Zion". Here the request is made for the coming of God's presence or Shekinah to Zion. The position of Abodah at the end of Shemoneh seems to have influenced the position of epiclesis at the end of AM. Oesterley believes that the earliest of epiclesis is related to the Jewish idea of Shekinah or the presence of God. According to Jews, when berakah is pronounced over a thing, it becomes the dwelling place of God. They also identify the presence of God with the Spirit of God. The presence of God in a person or a thing effected sanctification. According to G. Dix, and R.L. Galvin the earliest form of epiclesis in AM presupposes the idea of Shekinah. Maranatha of Didache invokes the presence of the Lord. The epiclesis of AM

"May there come, O Lord, your Spirit" is very related to it and is probably derived from it.

Dix holds that the epiclesis in AM is addressed to Christ who is reminded of His example and is requested for His presence in order to make the gifts His glorified Body and Blood. We may note that sarrar, the twin anaphora of AM is also addressed to Christ. The opinion of B.D. Spinks is here worth noting: "Both the formula Maranatha and the epiclesis in the Acts of Thomas are in the imperative addressed to Christ. Maronite Sarrar is also addressed to the Son, as was probably once also that of Addai and Mari"

The question arises whether the epiclesis in AM invokes the presence of Christ or the Spirit of Christ or the presence of the Holy Spirit. We may note in this connection that the early Church did not distinguish between the Lord and the Spirit. St Paul says that the Lord is the Spirit. (2 Cor 3:17,18). After the resurrection Christ became the life-giving Spirit and the source of the Holy Spirit who was referred as the Spirit of Christ.<sup>20</sup> The Spirit became almost the Vicar of Christ and they became inseparable. It is this theological understanding that is reflected in the epiclesis of AM. Thus the celebration of Christ's memorial is closely connected with the invocation of Christ and the desire for His sacramental presence. In this

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Elevanal, The Memorial Celebration (Kottaayam 1988) 158

<sup>20</sup> J.D.G. DUNN, "Jesus - Flesh and Spirit: an exposition of Romans 1:3-4, in JTS 24 (1923) 67.

context epiclesis can mean the invocation of Christ or a petition for His coming through the Holy Spirit.

From what has been so far said, it is obvious that the position of "and we also" between the first part of the fourth g'hantha and the epiclesis can be theologically explained. Since the sequence of thought between the fourth g'hantha and the "and we also" and the epiclesis can be reasonably explained, it is not necessary to accept a nonexisting structure on a less convincing ground. If AM had been modelled on the West Syrian liturgy, they would have put the intercession after the Epiclesis. The present structure differs from the West Syrian one. Therefore the Botte's theory will remain as a mere hypothesis without a practical bearing.

## **Qanona II.**

It is a thanksgiving for the economy of salvation which includes the salvific work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit. It also points to the realized eschatology of the Church which was redeemed by Christ. It has been generally admitted that the second Qanona belongs to the early structure of the anaphora and that its function is to bring the anaphora to a close. The doxology reminds that the whole dispensation with which the anaphora deals is "towards us". Second g'hantha speaks about the O.T. salvation history, the third g'hantha deals with the salvation history centered in Christ. The fourth g'hantha is about the present economy of the Holy Spirit and of the Church. The fourth g'hantha is a thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who

brings about sanctification. Although salvation was brought by Christ it is the Holy Spirit who effects it in the faithful. The first part of the fourth g'hantha deals with this sanctification. The sanctification which is effected in the Qurbana is also the work of the Holy Spirit. Epiclesis is the invocation of the Holy Spirit for the sanctification of the gifts which means the change of the gifts into the Body and Blood of Christ. It is the continuation of the fourth g'hantha and is integrated as its summit.

It distinguishes the acts of the Eucharistic prayers: praise is the purpose of the second g'hantha whereas the theme of the third g'hantha is thanksgiving. The fourth g'hantha acknowledges that these acts of praise and thanksgiving are perpetually offered in the Church through the celebration of the Qurbana. The divine Mysteries are completed and perfected according to the East Syrian theology in the epiclesis which symbolizes Christ's resurrection. The anaphora till the epiclesis symbolizes the death of Christ and epiclesis symbolizes His resurrection. Therefore this doxology is well suited after the epiclesis.

## **Why restructuring ?**

In 1962 and 1968 taksas the IN was placed after the third g'hantha with which it had no connection. Since the third g'hantha is theological, IN which is historical should precede it. Therefore IN should be placed before the third g'hantha. Since the historical narration needs a historical introduction, "We bless God the Word,...we offer before you" which was

borrowed from the third anaphora was placed before the IN. The first sentence of the third g'hantha: "And with these heavenly hosts we give you thanks, O Lord" was retained before the historical introduction to maintain the connection with the preceding part. "As we have been commanded" was added to the third g'hantha which comes after the IN to connect it with the last part of the IN: "do in remembrance of me this that I have done". After recalling the incarnation and His life under the Law in order to redeem those under the Law, the prayer states that He left for us the holy Mysteries as the memorial of our salvation. Thus it leads to the recitation of the IN.

Such a restructuring in the 1962 and 1968 was demanded by the 1985 document which says: "A better and smoother connection between the gehantha preceding the text with the words of institution and the later be made.

A very serious problem is presented by the re-arrangement of the text of the Holy Anaphora operated by the 1962 text. Here the so-called "Formula of the Eucharistic Institution" is followed by a section of the last gehantha, before the Epiclesis.

It is altogether suitable and desirable to adopt here for greater clarity, for celebrative harmony, as well as for a more authentic theology –the apt solution of the

Missale Chaldaicum which has the following arrangement –Beginning of the third gehantha;

First part of the Anaphora of Mar Nestorios (the III Anaphora of the Chaldean Rite) that concludes with Phil 2,6-11;

-continue with the "Institution narrative";

-Then follows naturally the rest of the third gehantha, then the fourth gehantha, and then, at its proper place, the Epiclesis."<sup>21</sup>

This new structure of the 1986 taksa has the defect of having inserted the IN and its introduction into the original structure. The recent Roman document "Guidelines for Admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, dated July 20, 2001, which was elaborated by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Church Unity, in agreement with the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith and the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, and subsequently approved by the Holy Father can offer a solution to this defect. It admits that the Anaphora of Addai and Mari can be considered valid without coherent Institution Narrative in it.

<sup>21</sup> Final Judgement of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Churches Concerning the Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana, nr. 34

# CHURCH, THE SHEEPFOLD OF GOD IN MALANKARA LITURGY

Fr Philip Chempakassery

**T**he Church is the presence in space and time of the resurrected Jesus who is absent in his body. Many are the imageries used to convey the nature of the Church through the centuries. People of God, Body of Christ, Temple of God, Spouse of Christ, Flock (Sheep - fold) of God, Vineyard of the Father, Kingdom of God etc. are some of the strong imageries used for the Church. These imageries are not exclusive but complimentary, each of them highlighting one or other aspect of the great mystery of the Church. Basing of the sheep-fold imagery, the Council of Vatican II declares:<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the Church is a sheepfold whose one necessary door is Christ... She is a flock of which God Himself foretold that He would be the shepherd... Although guided by human shepherds, her sheep are nevertheless ceaselessly led and nourished by Christ Himself, the God Shepherd and the Prince of shepherds.

The flock-of-God imagery is a very powerful one to bring out the nature of the Church. This article is an attempt to articulate this imagery as reflected in the

Syro-Antiochene liturgy used in the Malankara Catholic Church of the St. Thomas tradition.

Shepherd and sheep are frequent imageries used in the Bible to bring out the relationship between God and His people. In fact, the Bible itself shows signs of much serious thinking on the usefulness of these imageries and the ways of improving on it to represent the new trends in the theological self-understanding of the people of the Bible.

## The Old Testament

The Hebrew verb *ra'ah* which is translated as to shepherd or to gaze occurs more than 160 times and the verbal noun *ro'eh* (shepherd) over 60 times in the Hebrew Bible<sup>2</sup>. It shows the importance of this idea in the Biblical life situation.

The OT religion and God concept are intimately related to pastoral life. Many of the great leaders of the Jewish people were taken out of the context of shepherding their flock. Abraham was a nomad and a shepherd. The same is true of the other two patriarchs and very specially of Jacob in

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1. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Art. 6, in W. Abbott (ed) *The Documents of Vatican II*, New York, Guild Press, 1966, P.18.
  2. Cf. R.L. Harris (ed), *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament*, vol. 2, Chicago, Mody Press, 1980, p. 852.
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whose name the Jewish people are known. The religion of the Bible stands on the foundation of these patriarchs and all of them are shepherds. The unparalleled Law-giver and the liberator of this people, Moses was a shepherd. In the time of monarchy this continued. David who is the ideal king of the Jews was a shepherd. Among the prophets, we have the clear case of Amos who was called from the pastoral field.

Though the Jewish religion has this tradition of shepherds at the top rank of its leadership, the Bible is not happy about the performance of these leaders though there are some who are comparatively blameless in their relationship with God and the people. The fact is that the Bible never speaks anything positively of these leaders when the shepherd imagery is used for them. The leaders of Israel are erring shepherds who feed themselves rather than feed the sheep (cf. Ezek 34:8).

The only true shepherd of the people is Yahweh, the God of Israel. The biblical picture of the shepherd is always one of love and concern for the sheep. The knowledge that God is their shepherd fills the people with joy and consolation (cf. Ps. 23). The deliverance of Yahweh is understood in terms of the care of the shepherd for the sheep.

He will feed his flock like a shepherd. He will gather the lambs in his arms

He will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep (Is. 40:11).

While Yahweh is the true shepherd and all the leaders of Israel the erring the shepherd, the Messiah will be one shepherd

in the line of David and will be a perfect model of Yahweh in his office as the shepherd of the people.

I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them and I will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them (Ezek 34:23).

## The Sheep

The people of the Old dispensation, the Jewish people, are compared to a sheepfold. The imagery complements the imagery of shepherd. The Hebrew Bible uses many words for sheep like *kebesh*, she etc. The word for sheepfold is *tse'on*. The people of God are the sheep of that shepherd and owner. It is mainly in the Psalms and the prophets that the sheep imagery is used to the maximum to denote the people of God. The conviction of the people was:

Know that the Lord is God.

It is he that made us, and we are his people  
And the sheep of his pasture. (Ps 100:3)

From this conviction people have the courage to pray;

Then we, your people, the flock of your pasture  
will give thanks to you forever  
from generation to generation  
we will recount your praisie (Ps 79:13).

God acknowledge that Israel is His sheep and like a sheep it is hunted by the enemies and so He swears to rescue it. He says, "Israel is a hunted sheep driven away by lions". Sheep Imagery is powerfully used to show the weakness of the people and its dependence of God.

The sheep frequently serves as a symbol for the people of God.... The imagery indicates the people are naive and must be led and protected by a compassionate Shepherd... When the people lack leadership, they are considered as sheep scattered on the hills without leadership they do not have the direction to work together to overcome the obstacles<sup>3</sup>.

### The New Testament

The OT imageries of shepherd and sheep for God and His people respectively find expression in the NT also. In the synoptic gospels the prophecy about the Messiah in terms of shepherd is understood as fulfilled in the person of Jesus. Jesus is the shepherd who goes after the lost sheep (LK 15:1-7). It is a continuation of the OT idea. What is new in the synoptic presentation is that there is an indirect identification of the shepherd with Jesus. But the shepherd-sheep imagery receives the greatest theological significance in John's version of the Good News. In John, the synoptic identification becomes direct and supremely forceful (cf Jn 10:1-18). Jesus is the shepherd, not in the words of any third person, but in the direct claim of Jesus. Yet he is not any shepherd, but the Good Shepherd differentiating Him from all the human shepherds of the people in the OT. John is bold enough to say, "all who came before me are thieves and bandits" (Jn 10:8).

The shepherd-sheep imagery finds the

maximum development in chap 10 of the gospel. There the believers are said to be the sheepfold to which Jesus is the door and they are the sheep to whom, Jesus is the shepherd. In the gospel of John the word *probaton* (sheep) is used 19 times of which 17 are in chapter 10. The other two are in the epilogue of the gospel (chap 21) in the context of authorizing Peter to feed the sheep. The word *amnos* (lamb) used in reference to Jesus occurs twice in the gospel. *Piomen* (shepherd) is used four times and always in direct reference to Jesus. The relationship between the sheep and the shepherd is one of mutual knowledge. This knowledge is not one of intellectual information but intimate and internal mutual relationship which is expressed in other places as a relationship of mutual indwelling (cf. Chapter 15 where the relationship is like the relationship of wine and branches).

This special relationship is realized because Jesus, the shepherd, functions in two seemingly contradictory roles as shepherd and lamb. Before John goes to the idea of shepherd, he establishes the role of Jesus as that of a lamb (cf. 1:29.36). Whatever be the exact meaning of the expression lamb in these contexts, it is clear that it is a lamb for sacrifice<sup>4</sup>. It is this sacrificial lamb who is qualified as the shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. Thus Jesus in his double role is the foundation and center of the sheepfold. It

3. R.L. Harris op. cit. vol 2, p. 749

4. For a discussion of the suggested meanings of the lamb, cf. r.e. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, The Anchor Bible series, New York, Double day & Company, 1966, pp. 58-63.

is in Jesus life that the sheep finds life. It is from Him that they nourish themselves. It is noteworthy that John never uses the word shepherd in reference to anybody except Jesus. Jesus is the only true and good shepherd. Even in the context of entrusting the sheep to Peter, John is careful to avoid the term *poimen* in reference to him. Peter can feed the sheep. But he is not the shepherd nor does the sheep belong to him, in the Johannine idea of sheep and shepherd.

"The central idea of the picture is the figure of "the good shepherd" that is, of Jesus Himself. His example of self sacrifice and watchfulness has always been held up to the pastors of the Church... but to these lesser pastors there is no direct reference in this passage, while the figure of the hired man supplies a warning to them all"<sup>5</sup>.

## IN THE MALANKARA LITURGY

The Johannine concept of the Church finds expression in the Malankara Liturgy. The shepherd;sheep imagery is more clear in the Eucharistic liturgy and in the liturgy for the ordination of priests and consecration of bishops. Among the other services of the church, it is the Holy week services where we can detect a developed theology of the church based on the sheepfold imagery. In this essay I examine only these four liturgical services of the

Malankara Church - the texts of the Eucharistic liturgy in use, ordination of priests, consecration of bishops and the Holy week services.

### The Holy Qurbono

The prayer used in the Eucharistic Liturgy may be divided into two categories - those that are permanent and those that are different for different anaphoras. In the Syro-Antiochene tradition, there are some seventy anaphoras (Eucharistic prayers). Of these only 8 are in actual use in the Malankara Catholic tradition, though the others are also being subjected to scientific study and analysis for use in the liturgy. Into these anaphoras is integrated many common, unchangeable prayers, whatever be the anaphora one chooses for the celebration. The Eucharistic celebration is an experience of the shepherding leadership of God. The first prayer the priest says after completing the Eucharistic celebration is Psalm 23 which proclaims the shepherding protection, care and love of God. The priest says:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall  
Not want. He makes me lie down  
In green pastures.  
He leads me beside still waters (Ps.  
23: 1, 2)

The priest is giving voice to the God - experience he had through the celebration of the Eucharist. Who is the Lord? It is both the Father and the son. The Syro-Antiochene liturgy does not make a clear

5. J.H. Bernard, *Gospel According to John*, vol. 2, International Critical Commentary, Edinburg, T&T Clark, 1985, p. 358.

cut difference in the shepherd role. This is only in keeping with the biblical tradition. The OT presents God as the shepherd of the people, and looked forward to the Messiah as the new shepherd. In the New Testament Jesus the Messiah is the good shepherd. Both these ideas are integrated in the liturgy and so both the Father and Son are interchangeably called the shepherd of the Church. In the prayer mentioned above the reference seems to be to the Son because in the next prayer the mention is about eating the body and drinking the blood of the Lord which cannot but refer to the Son. Moreover the general idea throughout the text of the Eucharistic liturgy is that Jesus is the shepherd. In the anaphora of St. James it is said that the Father sent his Son into the world to bring back the strayed sheep. If bringing back the strayed sheep is his function, then Jesus is the shepherd. Besides, many *sedros* used in the Eucharistic liturgy invoke Jesus as the shepherd of the people.<sup>2</sup>

As said above, this Psalm 23, which is said at the close of the celebration, is the expression of the total experience gained from the celebration. This fact becomes clear when we analyse some of the other prayers of the Eucharistic liturgy.

As Jesus is the shepherd, the church is

the sheep or the sheepfold. The sheep-fold imagery for the church is clear in many of the anaphoras of the Eucharistic liturgy. For example the first prayer of the anaphora of St. Xystus runs as follows:

Lord, give everlasting unity, peace and love to the holy church to the sheep and to the parish at all times. We praise and adore you, your only son and your holy spirit now and at all times and for ever. Amen.

To the holy church, to the sheep and to the parish is the translation of the original syriac phrase which reads: *L'idthok val'onok valmarithok*. The *vaw* of *val'onok* and *valmarcithok* is sometimes translated with the English 'and'. Though 'and' is the normal translation of the Syriac *vaw*, it is not exact and sometimes misleading. The English 'and' is very often a conjunction of exclusion and non-identity. India and Pakistan mean two different countries. Because of this exclusive nature of the English 'and' one cannot say meaningfully 'India and Kerala'. But the Syriac *vaw* has not only a connecting function, but also an explanatory function.

'The church and the sheep' - does not mean two exclusive realities of church and sheep, rather it means 'the church which is the sheep'<sup>3</sup>. In the same anaphora there is a similar prayer which also identifies the church with sheep.

1. cf *Anaphora of St. James, Second prayer of the priest after the Kiss of peace*

2. For example, Sedro no.8, 16, 17 etc. (cf. *The order of the Holy Qurbano of the Syro - Malankara Church*, 1972)

3. For example of this type of use cf Jn. 3:5 where Jesus says "....no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and spirit". Here first the symbol of the spirit (ie. water) is used and then it is explained as spirit by using the *kai* (and). Johns' semilicism is well known.

Lord, cause all your grace and blessings and your gifts to come and dwell in your church and sheep and parish and to overflow from it. We will praise and adore and you and your son and your holy spirit, now and at all times and for ever.

Here also the same is the construction. 'The church' is explained as the sheep of the God.

Jesus is the shepherd and the church is the sheep under his guidance and protection. But the imagery is not complete unless we know what the nature of this relationship is. It is not only a relationship between the sheep and its shepherd. It is much more than that. The shepherd sheep imagery of the Antiochene liturgy is basically a Johannine imagery. The underlying theology of this imagery is the developed shepherd idea of the fourth gospel. As said above, John has a different idea of shepherd than the other evangelists. In the synoptics, the shepherd is one who goes after the lost sheep (cf. Lk. 15:1f). But he is always a shepherd only, one who has authority over the sheep. This authority is used for serving the sheep, not to lord it over it. But in John, the shepherd is at the same time a lamb, sacrificial lamb to be immolated for the salvation of the sheep. The shepherd becoming a lamb or one becoming a shepherd though his function as a lamb is the special contribution of John to the Shepherd imagery.

In the Syro-Antiochene liturgy, the priest comes to the experience that the Lord is his shepherd and he will not be in want precisely because through the celebration of the Eucharist he was going through the

immolation of the lamb. It is the lamb who is symbolically immolated in the Eucharistic celebration that is experienced as the shepherd at the close of the celebration. This can be made clear by analyzing the prayers at two very important moments of the Eucharistic celebration.

Unlike the Roman and many other liturgies, the Syro-Antiochene liturgy begins with the preparation of the bread and wine and offertory. The liturgy of the word is integrated to the liturgy not as the first part but as the middle part. It is after the preparation of the gifts and offertory that the church starts with the liturgy of the word.

The preparation of the bread and wine which has two services is a very symbolic service in the Syro-Antiochene liturgy. It points to the central event in the celebration, namely the fraction which is the symbolic realization and re-presentation of the death of Jesus on the cross. The most significant and irreplaceable service in the liturgy is the so-called fraction, though it is entirely different in meaning and significance from the fraction in the western liturgies. It is a service which expresses the syriac christological tradition. The death of Jesus is the central event of the mystery of redemption. It is an enigma which joins two contradictory aspects of the reality of Jesus, the true man and true God. Death is impossible for divine nature, yet it is the reality through which Jesus saved the world. To ascribe death to the deathless is the biggest contradiction that the church has to tackle. The Syro-Antiochene liturgy answers this problem by saying that the death of Jesus was like the death of any man,

namely the separation of the body and soul. But this death is not to be reckoned as the death of a man because Jesus was God. But how to ascribe death to God? The answer is that the divinity of Jesus did not leave the soul or body of the human Jesus at death, though the body and soul themselves were separated from each other. Thus the death of Jesus is a mystery. It is symbolically realized in the Eucharist at the service of the fraction. But the fraction itself is not an event unrelated to other services of the liturgy. The very preparation of the bread and wine look forward to the fraction and therefore it can be called an anticipated fraction. In other words at the very beginning of the liturgy the bread and wine are arranged symbolically to represent the death of Jesus. At the service of fraction the same thing is symbolically represented by the rituals done on the consecrated bread and wine. In both these services the bread is called the lamb of sacrifice. At the service of the preparation of the bread and wine, the priest takes the bread and says:

Like a lamb for slaughter he was led  
away

Like a sheep before the shearer he  
kept silent

In his humility he did not open his  
mouth-

In the service of fraction the priest says  
looking at the consecrated host:

You are God the Messiah whose side  
was pierced on Golgotha of  
Jerusalem

You are the Lamb of God who take  
away the sins of the world.

Thus these two moments - the preparation of the gifts and the fraction, represent the same reality. It is difficult to see how the bread before consecration could be considered as the slain Jesus. But when we understand it in the light of the Syrian symbolic traditions it becomes clear. Reference may be made to the progressive typology of St. Ephrem for whom anything and everything is a symbol of the divine world<sup>1</sup> and the something can have different symbolical meanings at different points of history. The church is the fulfilment of the old people. But the church itself is only a symbol to be fulfilled in the eschatological kingdom<sup>2</sup>. It is a journey and it pictures "history as a road (*urba*) on which mankind has journeyed.... 'from the tree (of life) to the cross: from the wood to the wood and from the church to the kingdom'. (He Haer 26, 4)"<sup>3</sup>. The same is the process in which the unconsecrated bread is being prepared at the preparatory service and the consecrated bread which is broken in the rite of fraction, symbolically represent and re-present Jesus in the mystery of his death.

In short, we can say that Eucharist is the celebration of the death of Jesus and the participation of the church in that mystery. Through this participation, the church experiences Jesus as the lamb-shepherd. The church which stands in the lime light of this mystery knows her Lord as the shepherd and herself as the sheep.

1. cf. St. Ephrem, *Hymn on Virginity* 20, 12

2. cf. R. Murry, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, Cambridge, 1975, pp 53-54.

3. R. Murray, *The Theory of symbolism in St. Ephrem's Theology*, *Parale de l' Orient*, vo. 6, 7, 1975-76, p. 8.

## The Holy Week Services

The shepherd-sheep imagery is used very powerfully in the Holy Week services of the Malankara Church. It is a long tradition of the church that the faithful, participate in the prayers of the seven watches on all days from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. The mystery of the passion of Jesus is celebrated and re-presented in these prayers. The shepherd-sheep imagery receives very developed theological significance in these prayers. As we said about the liturgy of the Eucharist, here also Jesus is presented in his double role as shepherd and lamb and the church is represented under the imagery of the sheep. In the prayers of the seven watches along the word shepherd occurs 6 times in reference to Jesus. Jesus is "the shepherd who underwent passion for the Church". Jesus is the "good shepherd who was tormented by Judas, who became a wolf"<sup>1</sup>. The church prays to Jesus, "the good shepherd to chase away the wolves which steel the sheep from the church"<sup>2</sup>. Jesus is again "the good shepherd who visited the sheep and communicated through gestures to set out to the place full of peace"<sup>3</sup>. This place is then identified as being with-him in the presence of the Father.

As the shepherd imagery is prominent

in these prayers, the lamb imagery is equally or even more prominent. This imagery is used 26 times in reference to Jesus. It is understandable because in these prayers of the Holy Week, it is the sacrificial and self immolating aspect of Jesus that is important. It is in and through his mission as lamb to be sacrificed that Jesus becomes the shepherd of the people. In the prayers of the Holy Week, Jesus "is the lamb of mysteries, the perfection of all the types, the seal of consciousness, the High Priest who offered Himself as a peace offering"<sup>4</sup>. It is the sacrificial aspect of Jesus that is highlighted through the imagery of the lamb.

The church is the sheep of God. The word sheep occurs eleven times in reference to the church or its members in the prayers of the Holy Week. The following are the main ideas connected with this imagery. Jesus gathered his sheep to his mortal passion. The thirst of the sheep could not be quenched by anything other than his own blood<sup>5</sup>. By his passion Jesus pushed the deceiver down and from his hand rescued his sheep<sup>6</sup>. Jesus, the almighty went after the sheep and brought them back to the fold<sup>7</sup>. Jesus saved the sheep flock from slavery<sup>8</sup>. The gruesomeness of his suffering was not able to dissuade Jesus from going in

1. *Order of the prayers of the Holy week, third stanza in the second eniyono of Monday evening prayer.*
2. *Order of the Prayes of the Holy week, Thursday, 3rd Kauma of Night Prayer, Bovuso, 3rd Stanza.*
3. *ibid, Tuesday, Night prayers, 3rd Kauma, Bothedhaso.*
4. *ibid, Wednesday, Night prayers, 3rd Kauma, Bothedhaso.*
5. *ibid, Monday, Morning prayer, Bothedhaso.*
6. *ibid, Monday, Ninth hour, Eniyono.*
7. *ibid, Monday, Ninth hour, Bothedhaso.*
8. *ibid, Wednesday, Night prayers, Third Kauma, Bothedhaso.*

search of his sheep. He sought in the pit of the dead and found it. He did not abandon it. Rather he himself went down to sheol and looked for his beautiful image. When he found it he was consoled. The sheep was brought back to the garden of its inheritance.

As we said about the Eucharistic liturgy, the three ideas are interconnected - the shepherd, the lamb and the sheep. Church is the sheep. She is sheep because she has a shepherd. This shepherd is worth the appellation because he is the sacrificial lamb. By his self-immolation Jesus becomes the good shepherd and the church is saved by this sacrifice. Therefore her relationship with Jesus is one of the sheep to its shepherd. The utter dependance of the church on Jesus and the total dedication of Jesus for the salvation of the church are clearly brought to light.

### The Church Officials

The ecclesiology represented by the imagery of sheepfold is continued in the ordination of priests and bishops who represent Jesus in the church. This role in the church is the role played by Jesus. Therefore they have to represent Jesus in all aspects of his being. Jesus is lamb and shepherd. The basic idea of church leadership also can be summarized in the imageries of lamb and shepherd.

Presenting the candidate for priesthood before the presence of God, the bishop says:

May the church offer to you anointed lambs<sup>1</sup>. The priest is an anointed lamb. He shares this role of Jesus in his ministry. The same idea is repeated. The bishop prays in silence: Let us not do anything according to our natural instinct; rather give us the wisdom to select the worthy ones and offer to you<sup>2</sup>. These prayers give out the basic theology of the priesthood in the church. The priest is ordained to be a lamb, to share the office of the lamb which Jesus exercised in his ministry.

There is also the idea that the priest is a shepherd of the people. In the sedro of the liturgy of priestly ordination, the bishop prays:

Make him an instructor of the people in full moral life, make him an instructor to the people, teaching your spiritual sheep flock all the virtues<sup>3</sup>.

If he is a teacher of Gods' spiritual sheep flock, he has to be understood as a shepherd. Further the instruction which Jesus gave to Simon when he was entrusted with the keys of heaven and earth is remembered as referring to the office of the priest<sup>4</sup>. Thus it is clear that the priest shares the office of the shepherd also.

At the same time we should not lose sight of the fact that there is no direct and forceful statements identifying the priest with the shepherd of the sheep. He is a shepherd in a sense, but not in the full sense of the term. The correct designation of the

1. Cf. *Order of the Priestly ordination*, the first prayer.
2. Cf. *ibid* the silent prayer after the gospel.
3. *Order of the ordination of priests*, Sedro.
4. *ibid*, The song before the ethro.

priest is that he is a lamb - shepherd, the governing is intimately connected with the duty of self-immolation.

If this is the picture of the priest as it emerges from the liturgy, we have a quite different picture of the bishop. A comparative study of the liturgy for the ordination of the priest and that for Bishop will bring out the basic difference between priests and bishops.

While the idea that the priest is a shepherd is indirect and weak, it is very clear and direct in reference to the bishop. Shepherd (noun) and to shepherd (verb) together occur more than ten times in the liturgy for the consecration of the bishop. In a prayer the celebrant praying for the candidate says:

Now by your grace and mercy bestow on this servant of yours the glorious gift of *high priesthood*. Make him worthy of it. May this servant of yours become a good *shepherd* and a diligent server and a spiritual administrator to your church<sup>1</sup>.

From the construction of this prayer it is clear that high priesthood and good shepherd are put in parallelism with each other giving out the idea that they are synonyms. More over the main gospel read in the service of consecration is the mashal of the good shepherd taken from the gospel of John where Jesus says that he is the good shepherd. The bishop shares this shepherdly office of Jesus.

Comparing priesthood and episcopacy we can say the following. Priesthood is a sharing in the double role of Jesus as the sacrificial lamb and the shepherd. The priest is a victim to be sacrificed and at the same

time he shares in the leadership of the church. Over and above this double role of the priest, the bishop shares the office of the shepherd. The bishop is the good shepherd of the church as Jesus was and is. This office is given in addition to the lamb-shepherd office of the priest. Governing the church in itself is the episcopal office. The priest shares this office only in as much as and as balancing and complementing his role as the lamb, the self-sacrificing lamb of God.

## CONCLUSION

The shepherd - sheep imagery is a powerful imagery in the ecclesiological tradition of the Syriac Churches. God the Father who was the only true shepherd in the OT, sends his Messiah to be the true shepherd, the good shepherd. He is the good shepherd in as much as and in consequence of the fact that he is the lamb who offers himself for the sheep. In this lamb-shepherd, the church becomes a sheepfold or sheep flock nourished by the body and blood of the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

This lamb-shepherd, Jesus, gives this double role to his priests who are to be as much victims as leaders of the church. But the leadership of the church which is expressed through the image of shepherd is directly and fully attached to the episcopal office. Under this dispensation the church knows herself as the sheep of God protected and nourished by Jesus the lamp-shepherd through the ministry of the priests who are also lamp-shepherds and governed by the bishops who share the office of the shepherd in full measure.



1. Order of the consecration of bishops, Second service, Sedro

# The common way for the third millennium

*Message sent to all the participants of the Synod of Bishops 2001*

**Patriarch Gregory III Laham**

(Melkite Greek Catholic Church)

Dear Brothers in the Lord !

I have been very happy to meet you, my Brothers, at Synod, to make your acquaintance, to work with you, to converse with you, to receive news of the different local Churches, to exchange points of view with you.

We, Orientals, are a particular group at the Synod, as you certainly will have remarked it, not only at our cloth, our headdress but also at the way of thinking and our specific preoccupations. You also will have noticed that we are having a particular position, in the context of the universal Church, regarding ecclesiology, ecumenism and the relations between the Orient and the Occident.

My position is in the line of my predecessors, especially of Maximos IV Saigh. He was one of the greatest men of the Second Vatican Council who has smoothed the way so that also the Latin Christians have been enabled to pray in their own mother tongues. It was also he who proposed, during the council, the creation of bishops' conferences and promoted the idea of the Synod of Bishops; finally he contributed definitely to the rise of decentralisation.

My predecessor Gregory II was one of the great men of the First Vatican Council, too,

Both of them have always spoken in the name of the great absent, the Orthodox Church. So it is also still today. We, the

Oriental Catholic patriarchs and bishops, especially those of the Byzantine rite, have conserved, with tenacity and coherence, the great heritage of Orthodoxy and its sense, within the Latin Church.

\* \* \*

I am very glad to state that you also have discovered these aspects. I believe, however, that the Synod is but a beginning. This is the reason why I have put the accent on the Greek term in the beginning of this letter: the way to be taken together in the course of the third millennium.

If I wish to keep contacts with you, this is mainly because we are brothers in the Lord. We are in communion with you as pastors of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church, whether we are of Oriental or Occidental tradition.

I also wish to give you a few points of theological and ecclesiological reflection, maybe in the form of documents of the local Church in order to deepen the intra-ecclesial dialogue, which is today irreversible.

\* \* \*

Thirdly, we are always happy to receive news of the faithful of our Church who emigrated and are perhaps living in your dioceses, that we make pastoral measures in order to make them able to keep their oriental tradition or to lead them back to it. Wish such a help from your part, we may perhaps send a priest for these faithful who would be, for the time being, of course

under your jurisdiction. One could even think of an eventual constitution, in the future, of a pastoral unit of the Oriental Churches or, if the circumstances make necessary, of the creation of an exarchate or even an eparchy, as we have already done it in certain countries.

\* \* \*

In closing I would like to assure you that my best wishes accompany you and to tell you that I always remember you in my prayer. May this be the beginning or the reinforcement of a continuous contact *ad multos annos*.

Therefore I also wish to give you different addresses of our houses and institutions in the Mid-East, where you always will be welcome, alone or with a group, privately or as pilgrim.

Where it is possible, we shall gladly offer you accommodation. But where this is not possible, we are prepared to organise something. We shall be glad to make efforts if this helps you to make a voyage to the roots of Christianity.

\* \* \*

The Holy Father said that the Church must breath again with both her lungs. This is the signification and the importance of our mission, who are in full communion with the Church of Rome, but who, at the same time, have remained faithful to the Orient and orthodoxy.

One day the Holy Father has forged a nice expression saying that the words of the Occident are in need of the words of the Orient that the world can receive the word of God. The Occident must make a step towards the Orient because "*ex oriente lux*".

Our mission consists in bringing along more maturity and thus in smoothing the way towards the full unity, slowly and patiently, but also with perseverance, that "all may be one.. that the world may believe" (John 17: 21), and I would like to add: *that the world may have hope.*



**Gregory III**

Patriarch

Rome, 26 October 2001

### FORM OF DECLARATION

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Place of Publication                      | : 580/XIV, Manganam, Kottayam 18  |
| 2. Periodicity of Publication                | : Quarterly   |
| 3. Printer's name, Nationality and address   | : Dr. Thomas Mannoorampampil<br>Indian, 288/XIII, P.B.I, Kottayam 686 010 |
| 4. Publisher's name, Nationality and address | : Dr. Thomas Mannoorampampil<br>Indian, 288/XIII, P.B.I, Kottayam 686 010 |
| 5. Editor's name, Nationality and address    | : Dr. Thomas Mannoorampampil<br>Indian, 288/XIII, P.B.I, Kottayam 686 010 |
| 6. Owner's name                              | : Christian Orient Trust, 580/XIV<br>Manganam, Kottayam 686 018           |

I hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

March 1, 2002

Sd/-

Dr. Thomas Mannoorampampil  
Publisher

## NEWS

### Ecclesial Encounter for Communion

Paurastya Vidyapitham has witnessed to another historic event this year. An international Symposium on Ecumenism was held under the auspices of Paurastya Vidyapitham, Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious studies, at St. Thomas Ap. Seminary Vadavathoor on 28-30 January 2002. It was to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the P.V. A currently relevant and widely discussed topic was related for it "Ecumenism: Eastern Perspectives" has great significance today because of the ecclesial heritage. Catholic Oriental Churches which are believed to be bridges between the Catholic church and the Orthodox Churches have already enhanced the Catholic ecumenical vision. This Symposium has also contributed to it substantially. Ecclesiastical personalities and internationally reputed scholars and professors from all over the world either presented paper or spoke in the symposium. His Beatitude Mar Varkey Vithayathil, Major Archbishop of the Syro Malabar church, Metropolitan Mar Joseph Powathil, His Holiness Catholicos Baselios Marthoma Mathew II of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Churches in India, His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, Marthoma Metropolitan of the Marthoma Church, Bishop Thomas Mar Ikimothos, Bishop Thomas Mar Koorilos, Bishop Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery. His Grace Mar Aphrem, the Metropolitan of the Church of the East, India, Prof. Dr. Peter Hoffrichter (university of Salsburg, Austria) Prof. Dr. Mathijs Lamberichts ( Catholic University Louvain), Prof. Dr. George de Schrijver (catholic University, Louvain), Prof. Dr. Edward Farrugia (Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome), and Pro. Dr. Dietmar Winkler (Karl- Franz University Graz, Austria) are some of them. Participants include bishops, professors and students from various theological faculties - seminaries, secular universities and college lay people, priests and sisters.

The desire of Christ "that they all may be one" can become a reality if serious, open, whole hearted approaches from various Churches are being made. Ecumenical dialogues between various churches in India have contributed to the better understanding, appreciation and collaboration among them. The symposium conducted at PV is an important contribution in the academic level also.

### Synod of Bishops 2001: Melkite Patriarch gathers Oriental Catholic leaders

During the recent Synod of Bishops held in Rome in October 2001, His Beatitude Patriarch Gregory III offered a dinner to about thirty leaders of Oriental Catholic Churches. Present were the Catholic Patriarchs from the Near East, the heads of the East European Eastern Churches, of the Indian Syro Malabar and the Syro Malankara Churches, and the Metropolitan of the Ethiopian and Erithrean Church. During this encounter, the hierarchical heads had the possibility to exchange their ideas on the role of the Oriental Catholic Churches and on ways of cooperating on the ecclesial level.